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## Game on for Red Bull *and* Ricciardo

**Finally!** After seven long years, Red Bull looks like a potential champion again. Everything has seemingly come together with the RB16B – the car looks consistent and predictable, and Honda's heavily updated engine looks leaner and meaner than ever.

Of course, this is not the first time in the hybrid era a rival has put Mercedes under pressure, but never has Mercedes looked genuinely behind at the first race. In fact, this was the first occasion since 2013 that Lewis Hamilton hasn't qualified on pole for race one...

Mercedes admits Red Bull has a significant performance advantage right now, and Max Verstappen is champing at the bit. Only an amazing drive by Hamilton, allied to Max misjudging the move that should have sealed the victory for Red Bull, prevented a Mercedes defeat in Bahrain. The stage is set for a classic battle between the old master, the young pretender and F1's top two teams.

In a parallel universe, one in which he hadn't abandoned ship for a major payday at Renault, this month's cover star, Daniel Ricciardo, might also be driving RB16B and no doubt relishing the prospect of trying to make it a three-way fight.

Of course, this ignores the complex internal politics of a team drifting inexorably in Verstappen's direction, and Ricciardo feeling compelled to forge a fresh path for himself. But the common thread is faith. Ricciardo left Red Bull for

Renault partly because he didn't share Verstappen's belief in Honda. Dan felt Renault would come good first. Now that looks like a major misjudgement.

For Ricciardo to achieve his life's ambition of becoming world champion, he's now bet the farm on McLaren becoming a frontrunner again. That didn't work out for Fernando Alonso of course, but there's a lot to like about this fit. Ricciardo is a sunny character with a happy-go-lucky attitude, and Zak Brown is proud to have transformed post-Ron Dennis McLaren into a team that is, in Zak's words, less Darth Vader and more Luke Skywalker.

McLaren feels different now the doom and gloom of the Honda years has lifted, but that fierce desire to get back to winning remains. Both Ricciardo and Brown are big fans of Andreas Seidl – the best team principal in F1 says Brown – and a return to customer Mercedes engines is a logical step forward that should bear fruit in the short term.

If McLaren can defeat Ferrari and retain third in the constructors' championship, that would represent a great return before 2022's major rules revolution arrives.

That's when things start to get serious again. Ricciardo has signed up for three years on the basis F1 itself is moving towards McLaren's sweet spot. Will it be enough to beat what will then become the Red Bull works team? Who knows? But Ricciardo doesn't seem the type to dwell on the past in any case. Onwards and upwards.

### Contributors



#### DAMIEN SMITH

Our former editor-in-chief has penned another fantastic team history and this time it's Lotus in the spotlight. Part 1 starts on page 68



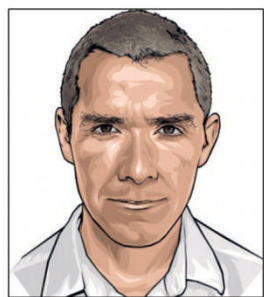
#### LUKE SMITH

Just who is Yuki Tsunoda? Luke gives us the lowdown on the young driver that AlphaTauri is expecting a lot from in 2021 (p64)



#### MARK GALLAGHER

Mark analyses the background to Lewis Hamilton's contract (p54) and delivers a personal tribute to Murray Walker (p32)



#### STUART CODLING

Codders interrogates Daniel Ricciardo on his move to McLaren (p40) and George Russell on what he has to achieve this season (p58)

### Team principals

**Editor**  
Ben Anderson  
**President, Motorsport Network**  
James Allen  
**Vice President of editorial**  
James Dickens

### Drivers

**Group managing editor**  
Stewart Williams  
**Executive editor**  
Stuart Codling  
**Art editor**  
Frank Foster  
**Editorial tel**  
+44 (0)20 3405 8100

### Pit crew

**Principal photographer**  
Steven Tee  
**Columnists**  
Pat Symonds  
Mark Gallagher  
Nigel Roebuck  
Ben Edwards

**Photo agency**  
Motorsport Images  
**Director, global client success**  
Sunita Davies  
**Production controller**  
Ben Webster

### Advertising

**Head of print advertising**  
Ben Fullick  
ben.fullick@autosport.com  
**Sales executives**  
Alex Edwards  
alex.edwards@autosport.com  
Kieran Rennie  
kieran.rennie@autosport.com

### Subscriptions

**Email:** help@asm.secureorder.co.uk  
**Customer hotline/back issues**  
0344 848 8826  
**Digital marketing manager**  
Kaye Benfield

### Partners

Australia Mexico  
Poland  
GP Racing is published monthly in the above territories.



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## Glimmers of a return to form

Formula 1 needs Ferrari to be strong, so a small but significant wave of relief washed over the paddock when Charles Leclerc and new recruit Carlos Sainz appeared to demonstrate that Maranello has found something.

If you only tuned in for qualifying and Sunday's race you might have been a little underwhelmed by Sainz, but until quali he'd been well up with Leclerc. This is him on his Q3 flyer where he couldn't quite match his team-mate.

By day, the Bahrain circuit can look a little flat, but the floodlights give you the opportunity to create interesting background effects if you slow the shutter speed down.



### Photographer

Andy Hone

**Where** Sakhir, Bahrain

**When** 6.16pm, Saturday  
27 March 2021

**Details** Canon EOS-1DX  
70-200mm lens, 0.4s @ F10



## Reflecting on a glorious triumph

After pulling out a remarkable race victory, Lewis looked pretty reserved on the podium (and there was no 'champagne' spray; the drivers think the substitute is too sticky). But I managed to catch this quite intimate moment with a nice reflection of the Union Flag on the trophy. Lewis likes a good pot – he's been critical of the shoddiness of some of the ones he's won in the past – and this is a very impressive example of the genre.

We work for the organisers so I had permission to go on the platform above the podium, making this a unique angle on the proceedings. To get there, though, I had to wear a hard hat and a safety harness!



### Photographer

Steven Tee

**Where** Sakhir, Bahrain

**When** 7.53pm, Sunday

28 March 2021

**Details** Canon EOS-1DX MkII

70-200mm lens, 1/500 @ F3.5













## A vision under the lights

Since we're operating under the same protocols as last year in terms of team 'bubbles', I'm spending the majority of my time in and around the McLaren garage on a race weekend. Creatively it's not as restrictive as you might assume, especially in Bahrain where the floodlights give a different tone to the light.

I stood on the pitwall to get this shot of Lando Norris arriving. The trick with a panning shot like this is technique, allied to a bit of luck with the motor drive. You need a slow shutter speed and a steady pan to ensure the car is sharp and the pit crew have a bit of blur; you take a succession of shots and at least one of them should deliver a pleasing result.



**Photographer**  
Steven Tee

**Where** Sakhir, Bahrain  
**When** 6.28pm, Sunday  
28 March 2021

**Details** Canon EOS-1DX MkII  
70-200mm lens, 1/12 @ F10



## The big wheel keeps on turning

Over the years the Bahrain Grand Prix promoters have kept coming up with new ideas to keep the event fresh and attract new visitors, from experimenting with different layouts to introducing the day-into-night format, and then this mini theme park arrived in 2019.

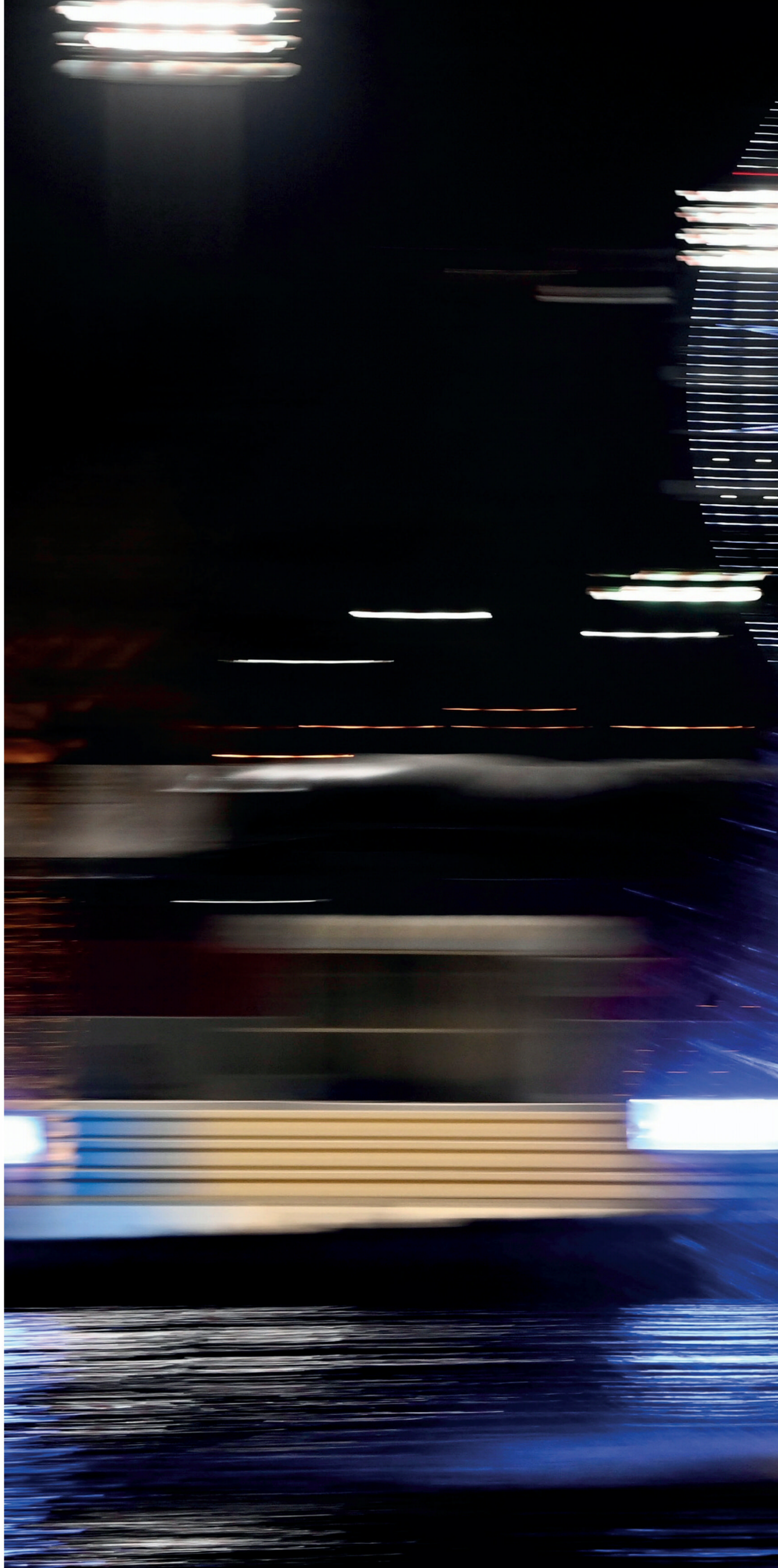
For those keen to lose their lunch there's a 60-metre-high 'Star Flyer', while those who like to hit the heights at a more sedate pace can climb on the 42-metre ferris wheel. Besides adding an extra element for spectators, it's illuminated at night as well – which gives you a really interesting graphic effect here in what might otherwise be a routine panning shot.



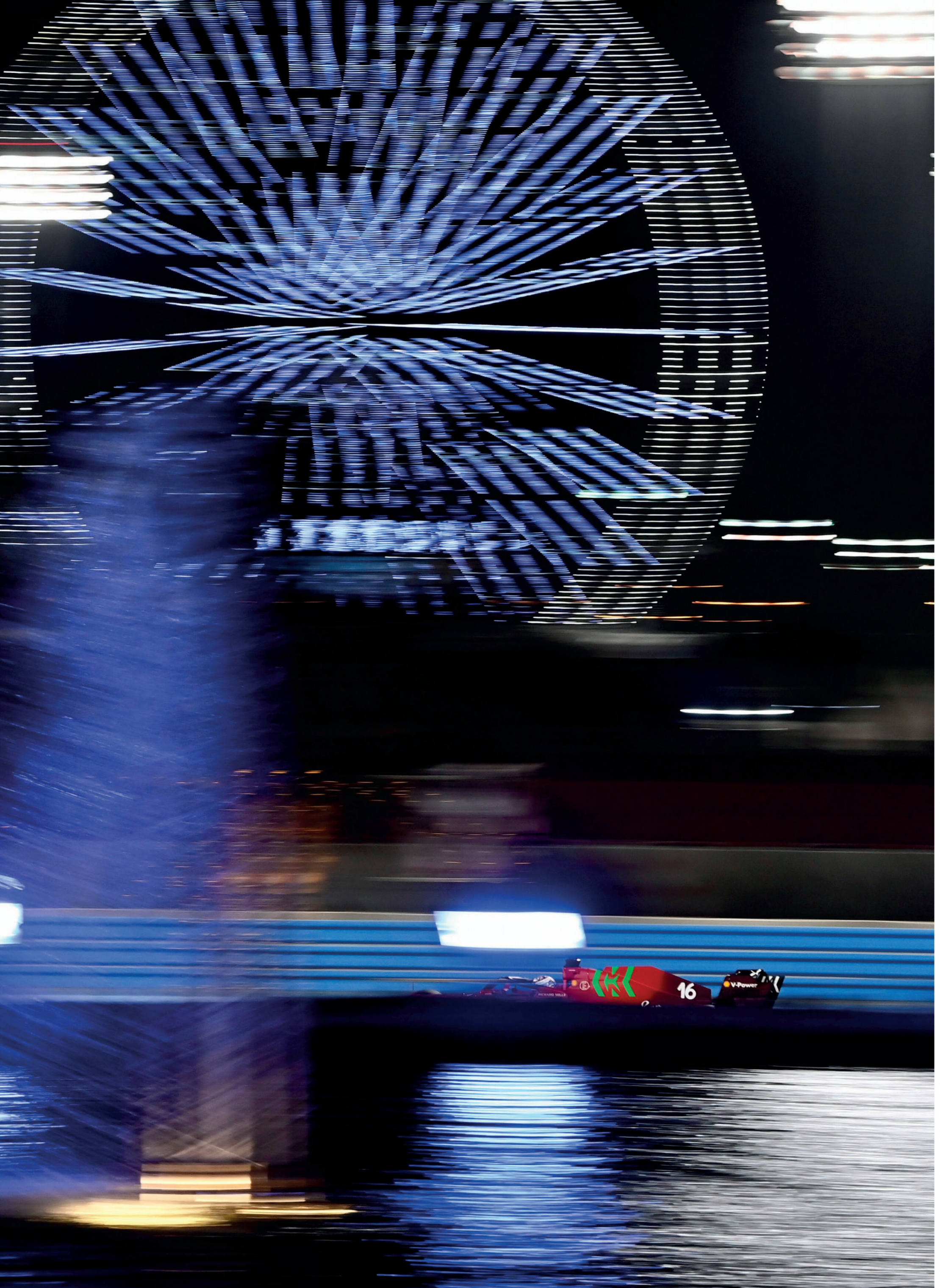
**Photographer**  
Mark Sutton

**Where** Sakhir, Bahrain  
**When** 6.28pm, Saturday  
27 March 2021

**Details** Nikon D6  
70-200mm lens, 1/30 @ F14









## Mick's not making up the numbers

One of the most interesting new storylines in Formula 1 this year is the much-heralded arrival of Michael Schumacher's son, albeit in a car which hasn't had much development. It does have a new look, though, courtesy of new title sponsorship from Uralkali.

Since this is likely to be a year of treading water in a tricky car for Mick, the media need something to talk about so they've alighted upon his race number: 47. Apparently Sky's Martin Brundle thinks it's ugly. Perhaps they should watch him at work instead. In the garage he exudes a mature and measured vibe and he's got an eye for detail.



### Photographer

Andy Hone

**Where** Sakhir, Bahrain

**When** 5.59pm, Friday

26 March 2021

**Details** Canon EOS-1DX

24mm lens, 0.3s @ F16









# SPRINT RACES REOPEN BUDGET ARGUMENT

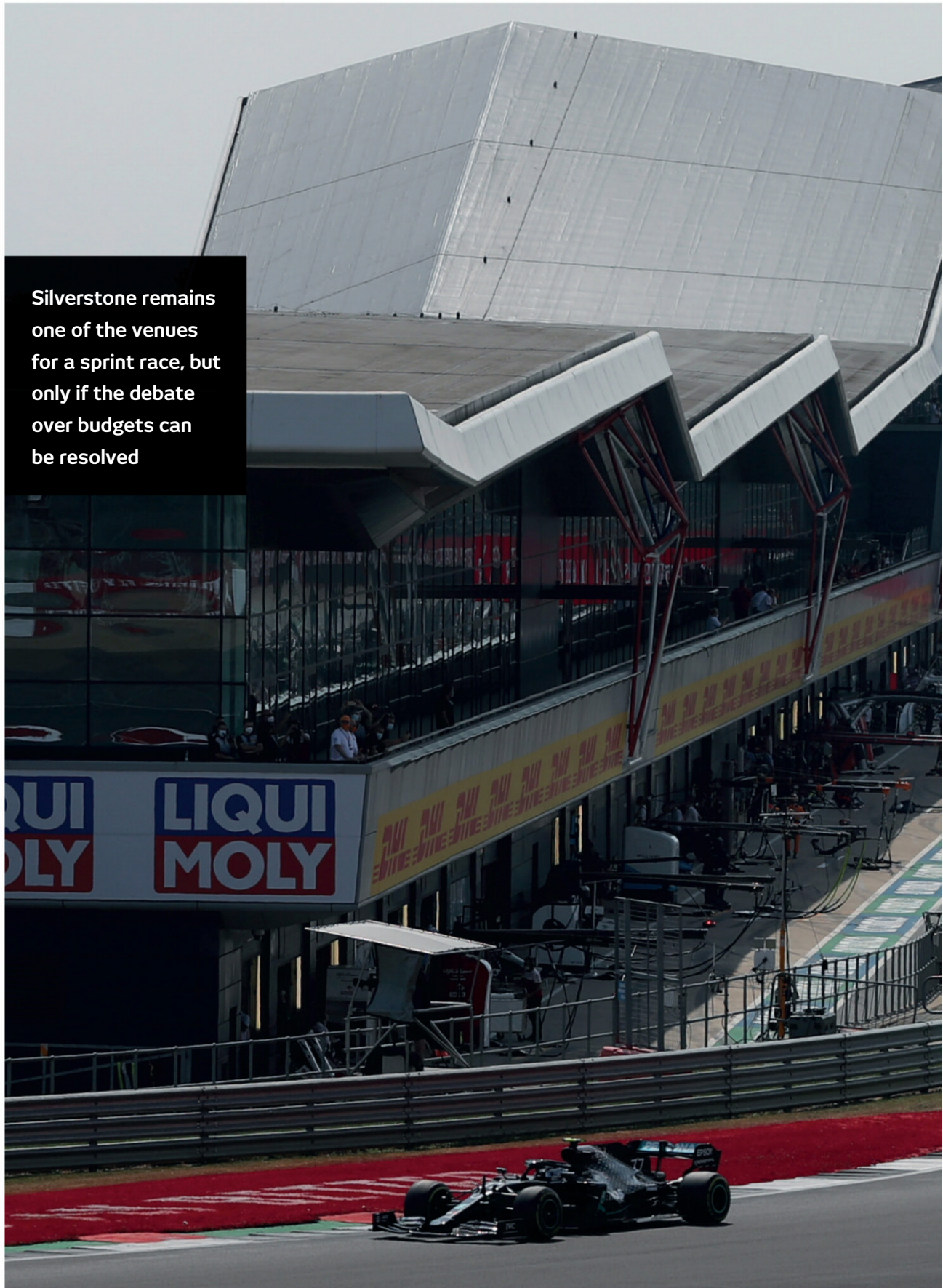
**01** **Controversial plans to experiment** with a new format at three race weekends this year have hit another snag. Leading teams are now claiming any damage incurred during the 100km Saturday sprint races (to be evaluated at Silverstone, Monza and Interlagos) would threaten their ability to comply with the new budget cap.

Financial pressures related to the Coronavirus pandemic prompted all competitors to agree last year not only to the principle of a budget cap – a notion many of them had previously fought against – but also to a lower figure than the \$175million per year originally agreed. This season the cap for each team is \$145million plus an additional allowance of \$2.4m (the cap is based on there being 21 races, and 23 are on the schedule). The figure is on a glide path to \$140m next year and \$135m from 2023.

Mercedes, Red Bull and Ferrari have long spent well in excess of these figures and have had to reduce their headcounts by various means, including redeployment of staff to adjacent businesses. They say they are now operating within the cap this season – but only just.

The more recent appearance of the sprint-race format has introduced the possibility of extra costs which weren't factored into the original discussions about the budget cap. On the three experimental weekends, a qualifying session will be held on Friday to determine the grid for a 100km race on Saturday, which will in turn set the grid for Sunday. Teams have raised the possibility of additional wear and tear on components and the likelihood of damage, since the sprint races are liable to become high-stakes affairs if points and grid positions are involved.

Mercedes and Red Bull have linked participation in sprint races with the likelihood of redundancies, though it is difficult to establish to what extent this is being used



**Silverstone remains one of the venues for a sprint race, but only if the debate over budgets can be resolved**

PICTURES: CHARLES COATES



**The big question mark for teams over sprint races is the additional cost of repairs in the event of an accident**

as a negotiating tool. *GP Racing* understands Formula One Management has acknowledged the plan involves extra expense and has offered each team \$1m to cover such costs.

“We are really struggling to just come in below the budget cap, and we’re talking about tens of thousands of pounds and not hundreds of thousands,” said Mercedes team principal Toto Wolff. “We haven’t got the margin to go for it [the sprint race format] and then find out that there is an extra half-million pounds or more that we have to find within that budget cap. Because that could mean looking at people again and that’s not where I want to go any more, at all.”

It’s believed that more than one team has declared the \$1m





extra allowance insufficient and has demanded three times that. Other teams have resisted the idea of factoring in an extra allowance since it may be too much, and some competitors may therefore be able to exploit it for performance gains. Among the counter-proposals is that any payments should be based on an independent post-race audit of actual damage.

“We accept that cash in for this, that what’s been proposed, doesn’t match cash out at the moment,” said Red Bull team principal Christian Horner. “So effectively it’s an investment by the teams into FOM to say: ‘OK, we support this in the hope that if it works it generates future revenue, future interest, future benefit into the sport in future years.’

“There just has to be a sensible allowance that takes that into account, because we’re chasing £10,000, £20,000, £30,000 savings at the moment to ensure that we’re hitting the budget cap. We’re keen to support it but there needs to be an accommodation.”

One team which has consistently argued for a lower budget cap is McLaren and it is urging caution on extra payments.

“There are some different proposals on the table,” said CEO Zak Brown. “We just need to make sure that we address that specific issue and that we don’t put a rule in place which creates an opportunity and starts expanding the budget cap we’ve all agreed to. I’m confident we’ll figure that out.” ▶



## RUSSELL AND VERSTAPPEN TIPPED FOR MERC

**02** Since both Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas are out-of-contract at the end of this season – and Hamilton only concluded his last round of negotiations at the beginning of the year – the identity of Mercedes’ 2022 line up is bound to be one of the key talking points of the coming months. But few expected insider speculation to kick off quite this early, as McLaren CEO Zak Brown told the *Daily Mail* in Bahrain that he expected George Russell and Max Verstappen to replace Hamilton and Bottas.

“It seems to me that would be the logical choice for Mercedes,” said Brown. “Given George’s relationship with Mercedes – and he’s out of contract [with Williams] is my understanding at the end of the year – you have Lewis on a one-year contract, and you have Max who I believe is a free agent at the end of the year. Whether that actually ends up happening or not, and I’m not trying to stir it, that’s kind of what it looks like would happen to me.”

While both Russell and Esteban Ocon are Mercedes junior drivers, it’s understood that Russell’s stock is higher and he would be first in line for recruitment to the senior team. Although Russell signed a three-year contract with Williams in 2019 which takes him through to the end of this season, there was speculation last year that he might be replaced by Sergio Pérez, who ultimately took his portfolio of personal sponsors to Red Bull. Mercedes intervened in the affair via team principal Toto Wolff.

Mercedes has also been linked with a move on Verstappen, and Wolff admitted at the team’s 2021 launch that Max would be an ideal catch, though he ruled out



**Speculation that Russell (left) and Verstappen (right) will replace Bottas (centre) and Hamilton at Mercedes for 2022 has kicked off following Zak Brown’s comments**

making any approach until he had “a clear understanding” with Hamilton and Bottas. Verstappen is on a long-term deal with Red Bull which locks him in until the end of 2023, but this is subject to break clauses on both sides.

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner has confirmed “there is an element of performance related to Max’s contract” but that it does not relate specifically to the Honda engine. He has also alluded to the pointlessness of using a contract to retain a driver who no longer wishes to be part of your team.

“It’s more about relationships,” Horner said during the launch of Red Bull’s new powertrains division. “You only pull a contract out of a drawer when you’ve got a problem, in my experience. The relationship with Max is very strong. He believes in the project, and what we’re doing. He sees the investment Red Bull is making, very much with the recent commitment on the powertrain, he believes in the people within the team. I’m confident that we won’t need to refer to any contractual clauses.”

Red Bull motorsport advisor Helmut Marko heaped scorn upon the idea, telling *Sky Sports Germany*: “Zak Brown is a good storyteller. He talks all day long about funny things, but he has no idea what our clause on early termination of the contract really is. We just need a championship-worthy car and then Verstappen will be more than happy with us.”

On present form, you would think that Max is at the very least fairly satisfied with the package Red Bull has produced for him...

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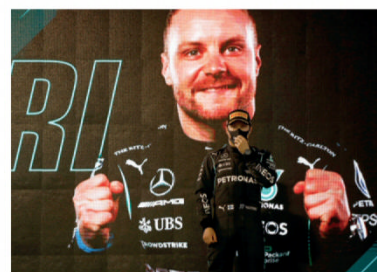
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Is 2021 make-or-break time for Bottas at Mercedes?



**PIERRE GASLY**

What’s the next step for Gasly and AlphaTauri?

**ON SALE**

**MAY 13**

- > Have the new rules hobbled Mercedes and Aston?
- > How Mick Schumacher is settling in to F1
- > Now That Was A Car: the Ferrari F1/87
- > The history of Team Lotus, part 2

PICTURES: ANDY HONE; CHARLES COATES; SIMON GALLOWAY  
\*CONTENTS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



# WILLIAMS REVAMPS TECH TEAM

**03** Two years after parting company with former technical director Paddy Lowe, Williams has filled the role in the course of making two key appointments. Both individuals are high achievers in motorsport and have worked closely with new Williams CEO Jost Capito.

Significantly, Capito has fished outside the established Formula 1 talent pool to fill the technical director role. 52-year-old Francois-Xavier Demaison has an illustrious engineering record which encompasses a stint on Peugeot's F1 project in the 1990s, followed by work in touring cars and the World Rally Championship for Peugeot, Renault and Subaru, before embarking on a long stint at Volkswagen under Capito.

While at VW Demaison, known in the industry as 'FX', oversaw development of the multiple championship-winning Polo R and the experimental ID.R electric vehicle which smashed records at the Nürburgring and the Pikes Peak hillclimb. He brings a reputation not only as a smart, intuitive and rigorous engineer, but also an excellent organiser and motivator. It is these facets which are most tested in modern F1, where the complexity of the cars is such that many designers working in sub-groups are required to create a finished product.

Capito told the *BBC* that Demaison was "a brilliant engineer who has the right attitude and the right culture and brings something new to the team". Since work on the 2022 car to the new technical regulations is well underway, he wanted to bring in someone who could bolster and support the talent already working within the team rather than seeking to start again from a blank sheet.

"You have to trust in what the engineers have done so far and you have to add something instead of changing," Capito added. "This is where I have seen FX being highly intelligent and capable in building these relationships. Because the 2022 car is already far advanced, you have to add to it and not change the philosophy. He is a brilliant engineer and that counts more than having someone with huge experience in F1."

Capito has also hired ex-BMW-Sauber technical director Willy Rampf in a part-time consultancy role to assist with Demaison's F1 learning curve. Rampf left Sauber in 2010 to head up VW Motorsport, latterly acting as a consultant when Demaison succeeded him.

During his time in F1 Rampf race-engineered Heinz-Harald Frentzen at Sauber before becoming the Swiss team's chief race engineer, then its technical director from 2000 onwards.



Capito (below) has gone back to his former employers, Volkswagen, to fill the technical director role with Demaison (above)



**"DEMAISON IS A BRILLIANT ENGINEER AND THAT COUNTS MORE THAN HAVING SOMEONE WITH HUGE EXPERIENCE IN F1"**  
JOST CAPITO

# F1 MASTERMIND

Your chosen specialised subject:  
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- Q1** Max Verstappen has now started four F1 races from pole: Bahrain and which other three GPs has the Dutchman been the fastest qualifier?
- Q2** Which team won 33 world championship GPs during its 33 seasons in Formula 1?
- Q3** True or false: Martin Brundle was the last driver to score world championship points for Brabham?
- Q4** In which year did Ferrari finish 10th in the constructors' championship, its worst ever finish?
- Q5** Which New Zealander had the most F1 pole positions to his name?
- Q6** In 2016 three drivers also made their F1 race debuts at the opening GP of the season. Who were the drivers concerned?
- Q7** Which current F1 circuit has had four different winners in each of the four GPs it has held?
- Q8** Who scored more points in their F1 career: Satoru or Kazuki Nakajima?
- Q9** In Bahrain Daniel Ricciardo, Lando Norris and which other driver raced for the first time in F1 powered by a Mercedes engine?
- Q10** Which grid position has George Russell started an F1 race from the most: 16th, 17th, 18th or 19th?



1 Hungary, Brazil, Abu Dhabi 2 Tyrrell 3 True (1991 Japanese GP) 4 1980 5 Chris Amon (5) 6 Joylon Palmer, Pascal Wehrlein, Rio Haryanto 7 Baku City Circuit 8 Satoru (16 to 9) Sebastian Vettel 10 18th (eight times)





# THE F1 ANALYST

BEN EDWARDS

 @benedwardstv

PICTURES  **motorsport** IMAGES

the first driver from Japan to score points by classifying sixth at Imola, but ultimately his best finish was fourth. Instead, the kudos of a first podium went to Aguri Suzuki who stood in front of his home fans at Suzuka in 1990. Helped by the infamous title-deciding clash between Senna and Alain Prost, it was a special result and only two other drivers from Japan have been able to finish in the top three.

Having beaten team-mate Anthony Davidson to the British Formula 3 title in 2001, Takuma Sato had plenty of language skills when he became an F1 driver the following year. In 2004, at BAR-Honda, he ticked off another key statistic by becoming the first Japanese racer to qualify on the front row, achieved at the European GP, just three weeks before he matched Aguri Suzuki with a podium in the United States. Perhaps that was a predictive moment; after Sato's F1 career stuttered, he established himself in the US in Indycar and has become a two-time Indy 500 winner.

Kaz feels that while Sato was impressive there was another driver from Japan who demonstrated an even higher level of performance.

"In terms of pure pace, I think Kamui Kobayashi is the best so far – with consistency as well," Kaz says. "That front row he took in

Belgium in 2012 in the Sauber was good; it wasn't a car that was top of the line. But then Grosjean ruined his race..."

2012 was the second year that Kobayashi had been teamed up with Sergio Pérez at Sauber and it was a closely fought contest between them. Pérez had learned well from his previous year's rookie campaign but there was little to choose in the qualifying head-to-head in the first half of the season. Pérez gained an edge later in the year with the prospect of a McLaren drive at his fingertips, but Kobayashi fought back, earning a valuable podium at Suzuka and finishing just six points shy of Sergio's total.

Yet Kobayashi lost his seat for 2013 and his opportunities in F1 were finished by the end of the following season, while Pérez has become a race winner. Sergio is now part of the title-contending Red Bull outfit, a group that is always keen to develop fresh talent and which has placed Tsunoda at AlphaTauri. From dealing with one Japanese driver on centre stage in his early career, Pérez has another pushing from the wings as he seeks glory in his second decade of F1.

Tsunoda is perfectly positioned to build a career capable of achieving new heights. Pole positions, race wins and a title challenge have all proven elusive for his home nation so far, yet he is in a team that teaches and supports rookie drivers and is strongly connected to another that enjoys fighting for overall success. And at 20, he has plenty of time on his side.

## JAPANESE HOPES PASS TO TSUNODA

**AlphaTauri's new recruit**, Yuki Tsunoda, has already achieved a new milestone in the list of achievements in Formula 1 by becoming the youngest Japanese driver to date. Hiroshi Fushida was the first driver from Japan to put his name in the F1 statistics book when he tried to qualify for the Dutch and British Grands Prix of 1975, but his Maki-Ford F101 simply wasn't competitive enough to make the grade.

So three drivers shared the honour of becoming the first official Japanese grand prix racers at Fuji in the nation's first world championship event in 1976. While James Hunt battled his way through the rain to earn the title, notable achievements were made by home racers. Kazuyoshi Hoshino was the first to run in the top three but sadly his privately run Tyrrell 007 lacked enough sets of wet weather tyres and he was forced to withdraw. Masahiro Hasemi claimed a worthwhile statistic when he became the first Japanese driver to set fastest lap on his way to finishing 11th in the locally built Kojima chassis. Noritake Takahara was the

best placed of the three home-grown drivers who started, finishing ninth in a Surtees.

The subsequent race at Fuji in 1977 featured the first top 10 finish for another newcomer, Kunimitsu Takahashi, but the race also included an incident that stymied the connection between F1 and Japan for nearly a decade. A few laps into the race, Gilles Villeneuve's Ferrari ran into the back of Ronnie Peterson's Tyrrell; the Ferrari was launched into the air and cartwheeled into a zone where people were not supposed to be spectating. While Villeneuve walked away unhurt, two bystanders were killed and several others were injured.

The consequences were complicated; the race disappeared from the calendar and it wasn't until 1987 that a Japanese driver returned to the fray. Satoru Nakajima became the country's first full time entrant as he took his seat alongside Ayrton Senna at Lotus-Honda. The Japanese Grand Prix also returned, moving from Fuji to Suzuka, and the drama was shared with fans courtesy of Fuji TV, the nation's F1 broadcaster to date.

Kazuhito Kawai was Fuji TV's pitlane reporter back then and is now chief commentator. Unlike many drivers who have struggled with the change in culture, Kaz speaks excellent English...

"I was having dinner with the Lotus mechanics on one occasion" Kaz recalls, "and I was very quiet while we were eating. Eventually they said 'Kaz, what are you doing? Are you doing a Nakajima?'"

Nakajima's English was mostly limited to 'yes; no; good; bad'. In his second grand prix he became

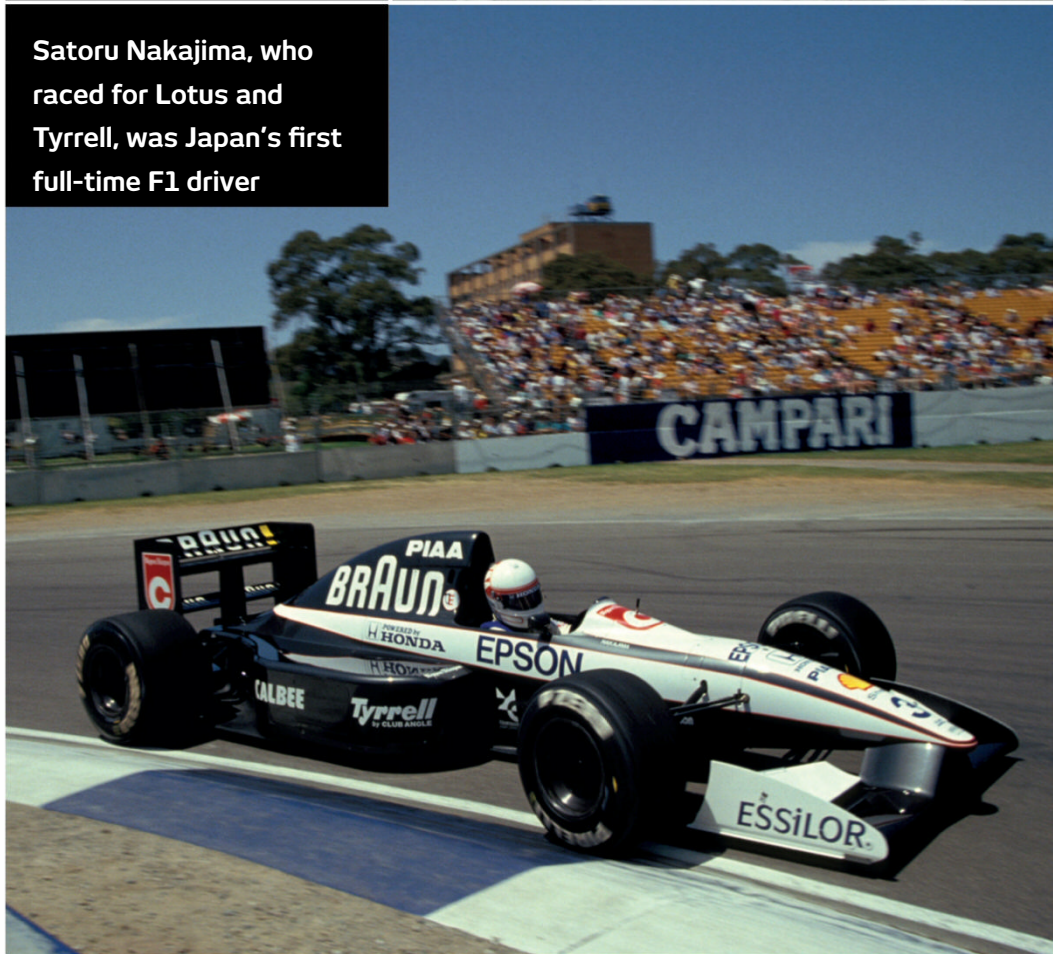




Masahiro Hasemi managed an unlikely fastest lap in the 1976 Japanese GP



Kazuyoshi Hoshino was the most competitive of the Japanese drivers in the first Japanese GP



Satoru Nakajima, who raced for Lotus and Tyrrell, was Japan's first full-time F1 driver



Kamui Kobayashi was the most recent Japanese driver in F1 and probably ranks as the best so far...



Another milestone was achieved when Takuma Sato started the 2004 European GP from second



Aguri Suzuki's 1990 podium in his home race was the first for a Japanese driver





# UNDER THE HOOD

PAT SYMONDS

PICTURES



enter a glidepath to a sustainable future without a complete upheaval of the organisation's current practices.

At the first level teams need to demonstrate basic environmental performance and a commitment to improve. They then move on to a commitment to follow internationally developed roadmaps toward environmental management. Finally, they can be awarded three-star status having both demonstrated best practice and made a commitment to seek continual improvement through the implementation of an environmental management system.

Such a commitment, whether it be in motorsport or in society as a whole, comes at a cost to the participants. So why does the FIA and

F1 feel the need to take on such a burden? The simple answer is that our audience is expecting it and our partners and promoters are insisting on it.

Sustainability has been an untold story in Formula 1's 70-year history – resulting in the development of the world's most efficient hybrid engines, as well as numerous improvements in other areas. Many of these innovations have had a multiplier effect, improving efficiency across a wide range of industries and hence benefitting the consumer and the environment.

Being at the forefront of automotive innovation gives Formula 1 a global platform to reduce and eliminate carbon emissions in an industry that is an effective microcosm of so many others. In so doing, Formula 1 can demonstrate, ahead of the radical innovations being introduced to the cars and power units themselves running up to 2025, that we all need to consider the bigger picture rather than just focusing on point of use.

That's not to say that point of use can be ignored. The 2025 power units will not only have a near-zero carbon footprint through the efficient use of advanced sustainable fuels, but by the same year we will also ensure that all our events are sustainable. This will mean the use of sustainable materials at all events with single-use plastics being eliminated and all waste reused, recycled or composted. Additionally, we will provide incentives and tools to offer every fan a greener way to reach the race and ensure circuits and facilities enhance ►

## SUSTAINABILITY SOON TO BE MANDATORY

While the main focus of the press release that was issued following the February F1 Commission meeting focused on the still-fluid 2021 calendar and the first outlines of the 2025 power unit and chassis, an innocuous and yet extremely significant statement was also made about sustainability.

At this meeting, the FIA announced that both Formula 1 as an organisation and the McLaren and Mercedes F1 teams, as well as three circuits: (Paul Ricard, Barcelona and Mugello), had achieved three-star environmental accreditation to FIA standards. This is the highest level of environmental accreditation in motorsport and it follows the guidelines of both ISO 14001 and EMAS, the EU eco-management and audit scheme.

While the organisations that have already achieved this milestone are to be congratulated, particularly McLaren which achieved it in 2013, the real significance is that for the first time it was agreed that such accreditation should be a requirement of future regulations.

The proposal is that by 2025 all stakeholders,



**The requirement that teams must be FIA three-star environmentally accredited is being proposed for 2025**

promoters, organisers, teams and circuits will hold three-star accreditation, with a desire for all teams to be in this position by 2023 prior to it being integrated into the 2025 Sporting Regulations and hence a requirement of entry into the world championship. This represents a significant reinforcement to the stated objectives of both the FIA and F1, which has launched an ambitious sustainability plan to have a net-zero carbon footprint by 2030.

What does this mean for the teams and the sport? Perhaps most importantly it is a three-level scheme, with accreditation going from 'basic' to 'best' practice, thereby giving teams a chance to



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F1 factories and facilities, such as McLaren's which have changed from humble beginnings (below) to state of the art (above), now account for nearly a fifth of Formula 1's carbon footprint

fan wellbeing and nature, as well as providing opportunities for local people, businesses and causes to get more involved in the action during a Formula 1 race weekend.

While environmental attention will continue to focus on the engines in the cars, these represent only 0.7% of the total carbon footprint of the sport. With 19.3% accounted for by F1 factories and facilities, 27.7% by travel and a huge 45% by the logistics of moving around the globe, it is clear there are many other issues to tackle.

In the Formula 1 operation itself a big effort was made to reduce freight weight associated with the broadcast centre, timing systems and event organisation by 70 tonnes last year. In a typical season the freight covers around 122,000kms by air. That 70-tonne saving represents a reduction in CO2 output from aircraft of over 5,500 tonnes.

Delivering the plan will involve F1 and the FIA working with all of its partners, promoters, sponsors and the teams, and building on the work that many of them are

## "IN THE FORMULA 1 OPERATION ITSELF A BIG EFFORT WAS MADE TO REDUCE FREIGHT WEIGHT BY 70 TONNES LAST YEAR"

already delivering on sustainability. Ross Brawn, the Managing Director of Motorsports at F1, often says that no one should be ashamed of being an F1 fan. It is a very apt aphorism that will become more and more fitting in the future as focus increases on

all matters environmental.

We race because we love racing, but racing with an environmental purpose will speed us all to a socially acceptable, sustainable future, thereby safeguarding the sport we enjoy so much.







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# STRAIGHT TALK

MARK GALLAGHER

@\_markgallagher

World Rally Championship, Paris-Dakar, Le Mans 24 Hours and World Sportscar Championship.

Then came to the move to Ferrari where he gave Maranello the heyday it never had – eight constructors' and six drivers' titles under the ascetic Todt, a leader who put performance before profile, aided by a cutting-edge grasp of motorsport politics.

It came as no surprise that Todt moved seamlessly into the FIA presidency in 2009, the last 12 years being marked by an altogether calmer, less controversial reign compared to predecessor Max Mosley.

It's been good for F1, an arms-length relationship with Bernie Ecclestone being followed by an altogether warmer and more effective collaboration with Liberty Media.

This year marks Todt's swansong as FIA President.

He has long confirmed that he has no intention to stand for a fourth term, even if his boardroom positions, ambassadorships and charitable roles outside of motorsport will likely continue.

Attention will soon turn to his successor.

It's a daunting role – one which encompasses not only the global

leadership of motorsport from a technical and regulatory perspective, but a vast array of road safety, diversity, innovation and environmental sustainability initiatives.

At a time of unprecedented change in the car industry, there is much to navigate.

Forty years ago, Todt and driver Guy Fréquelin helped Talbot to win the World Rally Championship for Manufacturers in their Sunbeam Lotus. In the drivers' standings they finished second to Ari Vatanen, co-driven by David Richards, these days Chairman of Motorsport UK and a potential presidential candidate.

Richards is renowned for his entrepreneurship, founding Prodrive in 1984 and guiding successful motorsport programmes for clients including Porsche, BMW, Subaru and Aston Martin.

He's also been seen in F1, initially in a one-year engagement at Benetton in 1997; later as part of a management contract at BAR Honda between 2002 and 2004. There is not much in motorsport Richards has not seen or done.

Richards is 68, seven years Todt's junior, enough for two terms in office if he has the energy to take it on.

Clearly there is something in the co-drivers' mindset that has enabled both Todt and Richards to scale the heights of international motorsport management. The attention to detail, obsessive planning, and ultimately the wherewithal to move into the driving seats of world motorsport.

## NAVIGATING A ROUTE TO THE TOP AT THE FIA

**Hannu Mikkola's death** has caused the world of motorsport to reflect on a golden age of rallying, when marshals' whistles would be followed by the deep ululation of an Audi Quattro bursting over a crest. Long before Flying Finns graced Formula 1, rallying was in thrall to the talents of a Mikkola, Vatanen, Alen or Toivonen.

FIA President Jean Todt was one of those to post a tribute, noting that the weekend of Mikkola's passing coincided with the Arctic Rally Finland. Forty-six years ago, Todt was co-driver for Mikkola on the original Arctic, the pair sharing a Fiat 124 Abarth. Later that year they would win the Rallye du Maroc in a Peugeot 504 Ti.

It's worth remembering that our motorsport's governing body is overseen not by some political bureaucrat but a man whose career CV leaves the rest of us feeling like lazy underachievers.

A decade and a half as a top flight co-driver was followed by a dozen years as boss of Peugeot Talbot Sport, during which time Todt guided the French company to myriad successes in the



Todt (top) and Richards (middle) were co-driving rivals in the WRC. Now Richards (bottom, left, with Ari Vatanen) could be Todt's successor at the FIA



# THIS MONTH

## Jost Capito

CEO, Williams

After nearly four decades in automotive engineering, starting out in powertrain development for BMW's legendary M division, Jost Capito understands the mechanical heartbeat of motor racing. After leading Volkswagen to World Rally Championship glory in the past decade he's aiming to help bring Williams back to the forefront of Formula 1

## CV

**2021**

Williams Racing, CEO

**2017-2020**

Volkswagen, Managing director of R brand

**2016**

McLaren Racing, CEO

**2012-2016**

Volkswagen, Director of motorsport

**2009-2012**

Ford Motor Company, Director of global performance vehicles and motorsport business development

**2001-2009**

Ford Motor Company, Director of special vehicle engineering/performance vehicle line

**1996-2001**

Sauber Petronas Engineering, Member of the managing committee (COO 1998-2001)

**1989-1996**

Porsche, Head of motorsport

**1984-1989**

BMW M Technik, Powertrain development engineer

**1979-1984**

Technical University of Munich, Mechanical engineering

**GP Racing:** Your predecessor (Mike O'Driscoll) was the CEO of Williams for seven years. What are the challenges involved in taking on a role like this in terms of learning how the organisation works?

**Jost Capito:** A difficult question! You have to come into an organisation without preconceptions. And when you see the team has been 10th for a couple of years now, you have to move the team forward – and believe the team has the potential to move forward. Then you get in and check what you've got, work with what you have got, and just improve wherever you see any opportunity for improvement.

**GPR:** Were you impressed by the facilities at Williams?

**JC:** It's different. As you go through the areas there is a lot of fantastic infrastructure – the windtunnel is good compared with some others in the industry. There has been a recent investment in new machines, 3D printers and so on. In other areas there is room for improvement, because the team had [financial] issues in recent years. But now there is the opportunity to improve all areas and you have to do that wisely, and look at which kind of investment and which kind of improvement gives the best value.

**GPR:** How do you identify those areas ?

**JC:** Mainly it's about talking to as many colleagues as possible, because people working in the various areas know exactly where they want to be and what they need. Then you look to combine all that, to make the individual opportunities and improvements integrate in one big improvement, so they work hand-in-hand and the various areas benefit from each other and are not working in silos.

**GPR:** How tricky has that been, given the social-distancing protocols brought on by the pandemic?

**JC:** Of course, it's different from how it's been before. Meeting people virtually or in video conferences,

## INTERVIEW STUART COOLING

it's completely different to going into a design office where it's all about the buzz and people talk to each other, giving inspiration to each other. When the design office is nearly empty, and most people are working from home, it doesn't create this team

feeling and buzz. So we really hope it gets back to normality quickly – but we're in a competitive environment and it's the same for the other teams. That's why we have to live with it, make the best of it, and try to find a working style that's the least compromising.

**GPR:** The new owners have said they're keen to retain the team's family values because that's an integral part of the brand. How do you evolve the business in a changing environment while keeping core values like that intact?

**JC:** If you look at the team's values, these are things that haven't developed over a year or two; they've developed over 40 years. I think I did more than 50 one-to-one video calls with all the managers in the team, and I found a very common scheme of the core values and why they're at Williams. This is a big strength for the team, something some others might not have. Everybody who's working for Williams is proud to work for Williams and that's an asset you should never underestimate.

**GPR:** At the team launch you said you'd been considering retiring before you took on this job. What was it that sold Williams to you?

**JC:** Firstly the Williams team itself. To run Williams, to help the team move up the grid, is something I could have never dreamed of when I was a boy, when I went to university and when I had my first jobs in racing. It's something that was so out of range that I couldn't even dream about it. And then also, when I talked to the new owners, their approach towards how they want to develop the team, that very much made me decide against retirement. There's no other position in Formula 1 I would have accepted besides this one.







FAREWELL TO A LEGEND  
MURRAY WALKER  
1923-2021

To many, **Murray Walker** was *the* voice of Formula 1. During a distinguished life and career, he conveyed the joy and passion of grand prix racing to the living rooms of generations of fans. Here, *GP Racing* contributor Mark Gallagher, who knew Murray since the mid-1980s, pays personal tribute to a wonderful man and a titan of F1 commentary

WORDS MARK GALLAGHER PICTURES  **motorsport**  
IMAGES







# FAREWELL TO A LEGEND

MURRAY WALKER

1923-2021

# M

**Minardi boss** Paul Stoddart's passenger jet, packed full of Formula 1 personnel, accelerates down the runway. Outside the cockpit door a man in his early seventies sits on a tea tray, a stewardess behind him, her legs either side.

As the plane lifts and climbs they shoot down the aisle, self-styled aviation tobogganists accelerating towards the back of the aircraft where the rest of the crew wait to catch them. It's a hilarious sight, prompting cheers and hoots of laughter from the other passengers.

Murray Walker is laughing like a kid on a swing. Hip replacement or no hip replacement, life is for living. No one could tell the voice of motor racing to slow down.

This was Murray towards the end of his career as a full time F1 commentator. He would head to Bournemouth airport early on a Thursday morning, the only passenger on board when the jet flew up to Coventry to pick up the personnel from Jordan and Arrows before flying on to a European race.

Everyone knew him, and he knew everyone.

'He was motorsport,' was Bernie Ecclestone's summary. The man who built F1 recognised the role Murray played in communicating it, translating the complexities of grand prix racing into something altogether simpler, thrilling and compelling.

The combination of his two-stroke voice and high-revs delivery meant even the most tedious of races was turned into an auditory sensation. From the moment Fleetwood Mac's The Chain faded away to Murray's introduction of, "And welcome to..." you knew a treat lay in store.

Murray was an Influencer from a different era.

No overnight stardom, just half a century of work as a commentator, primarily with the BBC, a life devoted to the sport he loved. He was born into a motor racing family: his father Graham was a works Norton motorcycle racer. Murray's first love

of motorsport came on two wheels, and that never changed.

**"If there had been a world championship before the war I think he would have won it in 1928,"** Murray said of Graham. **"I almost worshipped my father; he was a wonderful man. I very much respected what he did, and I wanted to be like him, subconsciously, and when the war finished, I started racing motorcycles in the fond belief that I would show the old man how a motorcycle ought to be ridden."**

Murray tended to skip over his wartime experiences unless prodded further. Then the stories flowed, although never the full detail of the horrors he witnessed.

He enlisted in 1942, emerging from Sandhurst Military Academy as an officer in the Royal Scots Greys, a historic cavalry regiment which had swapped horses for Sherman tanks. Arriving in Normandy not long after D-Day, Murray participated in the ill-fated Operation Market Garden in September 1944, recalling his frustration at being unable to reach the British paratroopers trapped in Arnhem.

He later fought in the Battle of the Reichswald forest, and had the bizarre experience of having his father turn up on the eve of the Allies' Rhine crossing. Graham had used his media contacts to become a fully accredited war correspondent, finding his son at the front and spending half an hour chatting with him at an ammunition and fuel supply depot.

**"I think he just wanted to make sure his little boy**

**was all right,"** was Murray's recollection, before adding, **"but I was a quite worried about him being not very far from shot and shell."**

His wartime experiences undoubtedly coloured the rest of Murray's life. He enjoyed his life, and in the motorsport community found a level of camaraderie reminiscent of military service.

His commentary career began at Shelsley Walsh hillclimb in 1948, the BBC then drafting him in to commentate on Goodwood's Easter Monday Meeting and Silverstone's British Grand Prix in 1949. It was always worth remembering that here was someone who had walked the paddocks since the very dawn of the world championship.

He competed on motorcycles, achieving success in scrambling – now known as motocross – then formed a father-son commentary partnership which lasted from 1949 until 1962, an achievement of

which Murray was extremely proud.

Described by so many, including former colleague Martin Brundle as a "lovely guy", Murray's warm personality stemmed from a happy childhood made possible by loving parents.

Even in his 90s, Murray's voice would crack with emotion when discussing his father, including Graham's untimely passing ►



**A WW2 veteran, Murray wore the uniform with pride at the 2003 Goodwood Revival meeting**







## FAREWELL TO A LEGEND

### MURRAY WALKER

1923-2021



Interviewing Damon Hill before Sukuka in 1996 (top), and being toasted on the way home from his final European race in 2001

aged only 66. Murray spoke equally fondly of his mother Elsie from whom he inherited longevity. She lived to see 101.

As the 1960s gave way to the 1970s Murray found himself commentating on a wide range of motor racing, from two wheels to four, including the British Touring Car Championship, lower formula racing and that made-for-TV-spectacular, rallycross. Long before Murray was screaming Mansell, Hill and Senna, it was Martin Schanche, Will Gollop and Jenson's Button's father John who were the focus of his excited commentaries.

His post war 'day job' was in advertising, an industry he adored. He worked with famous brands, using the power of the English language to excite and attract customers. He clearly loved wordplay. As his career in advertising drew to a close, F1 beckoned, a new chapter opening with the 1976 British GP. For 1978 Murray committed to all the races, but it was 1980 which brought about the famed partnership with James Hunt.

It is hard to imagine a more unsuited pairing. The disciplined ex-soldier would turn up with a set of immaculately hand-written research notes on each driver, team and circuit, only to be greeted by Hunt, unprepared and sometimes hungover, just as they were about to go on air.

Murray related many tales in his highly successful 2002 autobiography *Unless I'm Very Much Mistaken*, but not everything. On one occasion Hunt was nowhere to be found, forcing Murray to start the race commentary alone – not in itself a major problem as he rather enjoyed cracking on unaided.

When a perspiring Hunt finally reached the commentary box 20 minutes late, it turned out that he had been entertaining one of the drivers' wives in a motorhome. This being the only time in the weekend when she knew her husband would be busy.

Murray decided that was a story too spicy for the book about his own, well-ordered life.

For someone who enjoyed talking, he found the process of writing an autobiography more difficult than expected. When, in

2001, he was asked how it was progressing he replied that, **"it's not going too well. I have written 60,000 words which sounds like a lot until you realise I have only reached the age of 16 and haven't even joined the army yet!"** He must have had a patient editor...

The book sold a massive 560,000 copies and preceded a sell-out publicity tour of Australia.

As the Walker-Hunt partnership matured they brought us some of the most memorable moments in Formula 1, particularly the era of Mansell-mania – including the infamous tyre-explosion at the 1986 Australian Grand Prix in Adelaide.

**“And look at that!”**  
exclaimed Murray,  
**“And colossally that's Mansell, that is Nigel Mansell and the car's absolutely shattered, he's fighting for control and you can see what's happened.”**

It's doubtful that anyone in motorsport before or since has used the word 'colossally', but it was the perfect choice to describe a moment of near-catastrophe which ended Mansell's hopes of a first world title. This was Murray at his best, conveying the drama and excitement of Formula 1, leaving us on the edge of our seats and sometimes on our knees before the screen.

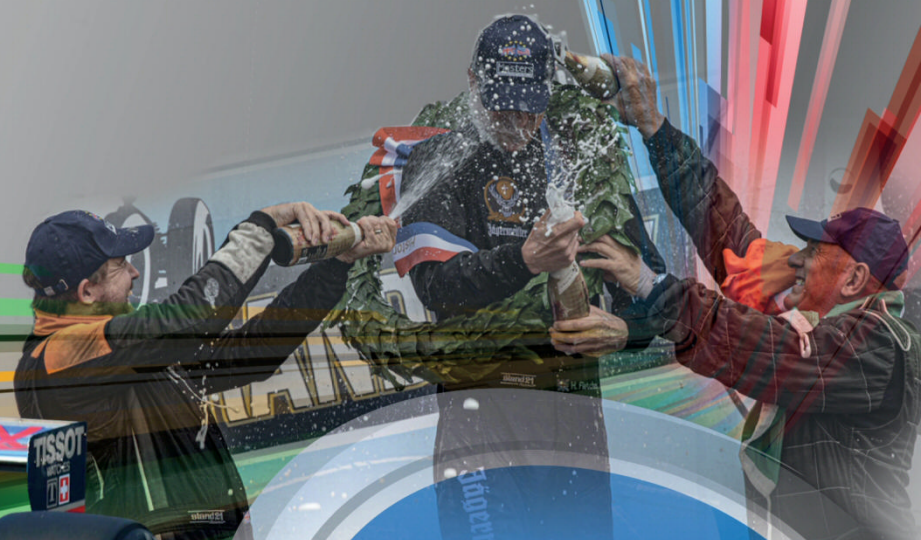
He put everything into his delivery.

“He doesn't just commentate with his voice, but with his whole body,” said Hunt.

The raw emotion often came from having known generations of team owners and competitors, from father to son. Through motorcycle racing he knew Jackie Stewart's father long before sons Jackie and Jimmy made their way in car racing, while knowing Graham Hill led to a genuine fondness for Damon and an appreciation of the difficulties which faced the Englishman on the path to his 1996 world title. ►



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# FAREWELL TO A LEGEND

MURRAY WALKER

1923-2021



Murray doing his job with the best: Senna, Mansell and Schumacher, the latter before Murray's final commentary in 2001



Murray's commentary on the moment Damon clinched the world championship at Suzuka is well remembered, partly because the 'lump in my throat' line is edited. This was not a case of Murray making himself the centre of the story, rather it was about the importance of family and the trials which Hill and his loved ones had endured.

**"And Damon Hill exits the chicane. That is his wife Georgie,"** he says in the original commentary. **"She is seeing her husband become world champion and I've got to stop because I've got a lump in my throat."**

Formula 1 paid its own tribute to Murray when his death was announced during the pre-season Bahrain test

A line which cemented Murray's reputation for being not only the voice of motor racing, but in some way everyone's favourite, slightly emotional uncle.

There were dark days, of course, Murray viewing San Marino 1994 as the low point. The deaths of Roland Ratzenberger and Senna left him to tread a fine line, his tone conveying as much as the carefully chosen words.

His decision to retire from commentary came in 2000 as the result of the *Daily Mail* calling him out for making an error when he confused the two Ferraris at the German Grand Prix. Stung by the criticism, Murray considered stopping, but ITV's Head of Sport Brian Barwick persuaded him to remain for one more year.

Murray's retirement at the 2001 United States Grand Prix was memorable, but this was not to be the last we would see of Murray Walker. Frequent 'one-off appearances' for the BBC, ITV and Sky Sports F1 marked a retirement during which he remained close to the sport he loved. He worked into his 90s, including writing a column for this magazine until he was 92.

The gaffes and Murrayisms have been liberally quoted since his passing, but who wants bland perfection? Murray was the classic car of commentating. The odd misfire simply added to the experience.

Although his passing brings a degree of sadness, at the age of 97 he had enjoyed an extraordinary life with three careers and a long, happy marriage to Elizabeth. **"I was lucky enough to be at the centre of everything,"** he once said.

He sure was.

When Heinz-Harald Frentzen won the 1999 Italian GP at Monza for Jordan, the team's flight back to Coventry was made memorable by Murray making the tannoy announcements.

It was eye-wateringly funny, and included a verdict on the race which could so easily have been applied to his own career. A career which helped to define F1 for legions of fans.

**"Sensational!"** 



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**Daniel Ricciardo** has found a new lease of life at McLaren – a move that's been years in the making, as he explains to *GP Racing*...



# “I’M SO SORRY,”

**GRINS DANIEL RICCIARDO** – in fact, his signature 1000-watt smile is briefly all *GP Racing* can see of him as the rest of his body flickers out of view on screen, briefly replaced by a papaya-coloured board bedecked in sponsor logos. “I seem to keep morphing into the background here...”

The slightly surreal practicalities of speaking face-to-face with racing drivers during a pandemic have served up a neat visual metaphor here, so no need to call tech support just yet: Ricciardo is thoroughly embedded at McLaren, even though he’s only completed one race for the Woking equipe thus far. His dalliances with McLaren go way back, much earlier than his previous flirtings with signing up back in 2018; earlier, even, than his furtive acquisition of a McLaren 675 LT while he was still driving for Red Bull. One of his earliest memories of motor racing is of being taken to Adelaide to see the final Australian Grand Prix held there, scene of Ayrton Senna’s last victory... in a McLaren.

“It’s hard to get caught up in it [Formula 1] when you’re in it. Being in F1 – *all in* – it’s hard to step away from it and actually reflect on those moments. And if I do, like now, if I take myself back to when I was a kid and think of all that, it’s kind of pinch myself kind of stuff – how I got here, literally talking about McLaren, being a driver, because it’s pretty crazy.

“I sometimes don’t like to think about it too much, because it is a bit overwhelming. But it is actually nice to have that – to be able to look back, because I’m very appreciative to be in this position. Back when I was a kid I would never have thought in a million years of being here – I would have dreamed but never thought!

“As a kid, in my era at least, you knew two teams: Ferrari and McLaren. And Senna, Prost, those are the names I remembered first as a kid, so I was always very familiar with McLaren. It wasn’t until I got there, to the MTC [McLaren Technology Centre], that I realised how kind of overwhelming McLaren are in terms of their facilities. It still feels pretty surreal: all the cars down the boulevard, and the trophy cabinets are ridiculous. There’s so many trophies.

“But – and don’t get me wrong, all that’s nice, it’s awesome – but I signed with McLaren because of what they’re currently doing, and all this [historic] stuff is the icing on the cake.”

Based on the current state of play there’s a strong argument to anoint McLaren as F1’s third strongest team this season – which, on the face

of it, makes Ricciardo’s decision to jump ship from Renault (now rebranded as Alpine) seem particularly smart and well-timed. That would be over-stating it somewhat. While McLaren has been on a strong recovery trajectory over the past two seasons after a long and inglorious slump, when Ricciardo did the deal a full year ago it only had one of those seasons in the bank. That, and the promise of a new Mercedes engine supply arrangement starting this season.

Ultimately McLaren’s form during 2020 vindicated Ricciardo’s move, as did the impression created by recently recruited team principal Andreas Seidl, who arrived just as McLaren was setting its technical house in order during the early months of 2019. While running Porsche’s LMP1 programme Seidl worked with Mark Webber, who passed on a glowing reference to his fellow Aussie.

When Ricciardo was feeling for the exit at Red Bull in mid-2018 he entertained offers from both McLaren and Renault, ultimately plumping for Enstone. This decision moved Webber to proclaim Ricciardo was essentially cashing out of F1 by taking a well-paid drive that would lead to nothing. Renault’s form in Ricciardo’s first season there essentially bore that theory out as the team required yet another bout of hirings and firings to produce a useful car.

Displaced by Ricciardo at Renault, Carlos Sainz moved to McLaren and duly performed a career reboot which has enabled him to snag a seat at Ferrari. He also bonded with McLaren CEO Zak Brown over a mutual love of golf. But, at the time, Brown’s pronouncements about this game of musical chairs seemed laced with regret at not landing Ricciardo. “You’ll just have to ask Daniel about it,” was how he rebuffed further enquiries. It feels like now is indeed right for

*GP Racing* to do the honours... and ask Daniel about it (again).

“A couple of years ago, when I chose to go to Renault, I was excited about Renault’s position in the sport,” he says. “But I think it was also... I feel like I’ve said this a thousand times, but I just felt like my time was done at Red Bull as well. I’d spent about 10 years of my career there, so I just felt it was time to move on.

“And then what I thought about Renault at that time, I then saw in McLaren over the past 12-24 months. It’s a similar feeling, going from Renault to McLaren as it was from Red Bull. But I certainly saw a lot of promise in the plan.

“I’ll be honest, [in 2018] there were days where I was Red Bull, there were days when I was McLaren, days when I was Renault. On any given day, I was fine on all three of those teams. But, yeah, it came down pretty close to the wire. And to be honest, Red Bull was there until the end in my head. I kept going back and forth, thinking, ‘Ah, maybe I’ll just stay where I know.’

“McLaren, I really liked the people, I felt like they had a good energy about them, a nice aura. But as you know, back in 2018, they were still in a rut and it was hard to see... I don’t even know if they predicted the step they were going to make in 2019, and 2020.

“So I kind of just had to see it first – and, yeah, they also didn’t sell me the dream. And I think that’s why I say 2019 and 2020 maybe surprised them as well. It was timing as opposed to anything, and I feel now is a pretty good time.”

It would be unwise indeed to arrive at a firm pecking order just one race into a season, even if Bahrain is a more representative venue than Albert Park, the usual opener. But McLaren’s performance was impressive, albeit with a few caveats: Ricciardo and team-mate Lando Norris qualified sixth and seventh, separated by nine tenths from Max Verstappen’s Red Bull, four tenths from the slowest Mercedes, a quarter of a second behind Charles Leclerc’s Ferrari and just behind Pierre Gasly’s AlphaTauri. Norris finished fourth, two places ahead of Leclerc, suggesting McLaren has an edge on Ferrari; AlphaTauri’s true potential is harder to measure, since Gasly hit Ricciardo early on, removing his own front wing and damaging Ricciardo’s floor.

What we can say of Ricciardo’s drive is that Norris usurped him at the start, then the combination of floor damage and losing track position in the first round of pitstops (he was

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Ricciardo has finally been able to climb into a McLaren F1 car and the early signs for the combination, despite a damaged car in the Bahrain season opener, are promising



too close to Norris for the team to double-stack) consigned him to seventh at the chequered flag, unable to emulate Norris's feat of passing Leclerc on track. But Dan was usefully ahead of both Aston Martins – indeed, he made short work of Sebastian Vettel after emerging from his first stop behind.

There are voices within Mercedes and Aston Martin claiming that the new aerodynamic restrictions have had a disproportionately large effect on the cars designed around a low-rake aero philosophy – ie Mercedes and Aston, whose car is essentially a clone of the 2019

championship-winning Merc. If so, and events in Bahrain appeared to bear it out, then McLaren has got an early head start on the team it beat narrowly for third in last year's constructors' championship.

McLaren's MCL35M is, in common with several others on the grid, essentially a new car dressed up as a B-spec. Under the skin changes run deeper than those of its rivals, though, since McLaren had to redesign and re-homologate the crash structure to accommodate the change of engine. All the plumbing had to change, too, along with the gearbox casing, which is longer

and narrower for both aerodynamic reasons and to extend the car's wheelbase to achieve better stability in slow-speed corners.

After pre-season testing Ricciardo alluded to having difficulty under braking, although whether this is something which could be adjusted by a change of materials or setup is hard to divine. But since Ricciardo has a reputation for being the last of the late brakiers when overtaking demands it, this potential weakness is one he must address with due urgency.

"I think I was just finding things to talk about," he says. "What can separate the good from the ►





**“I’M GETTING THERE WITH THE CAR, GETTING UP TO  
A PRETTY GOOD LEVEL. IT’S BEEN – I DON’T WANT  
TO SAY EASY, BUT PRETTY SMOOTH SO FAR”**







great is just how well you can stop the car and feel what it's doing. So I guess brakes are talked about just because there's a lot of lap time in it normally, if you can nail it.

"Generally, I'm getting there with the car, getting up to a pretty good level. It's been – I don't want to say easy, but pretty smooth so far. Once you start to try to get that last few percent, that's what still just takes a little bit of time.

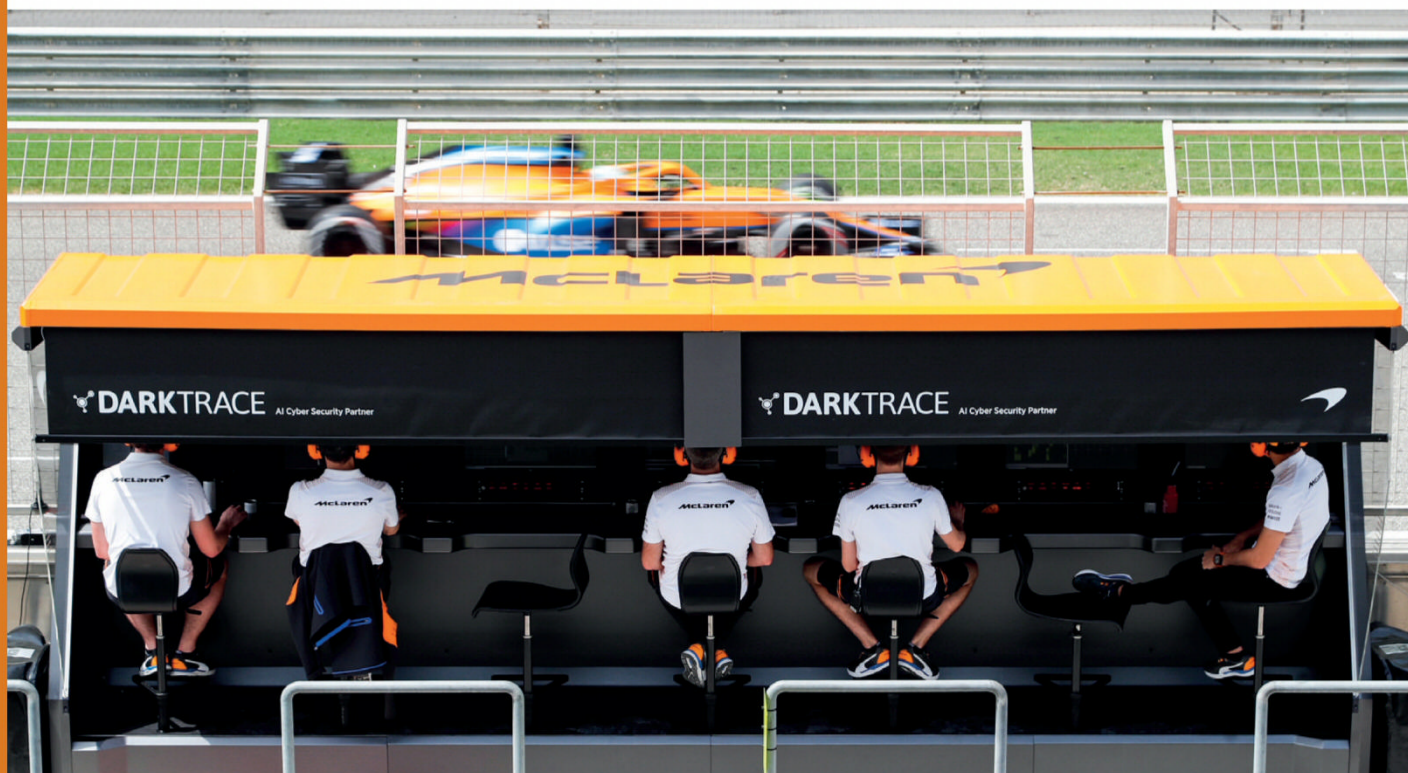
"The positive with that is that as the season goes on, each race will probably get better and better. So that's a nice thought. But also I don't want to start, you know, really off it all. It was a pretty smooth start."

Depending on how the season progresses, other opportunities within the McLaren portfolio may present themselves. While Ricciardo isn't planning on doing the full Alonso, and taking a race off to contend the Indy 500, he's aware the Bathurst 12-hour race doesn't clash with any GPs and McLaren has a car eligible to participate in it. Brown has also offered a run in an ex-Earnhardt NASCAR if Ricciardo bags a 2021 podium.

"I do have to ask Zak. I need to – even if I don't do the race – I need to drive a supercar



PICTURES: STEVEN TEE



**"I NEED TO DRIVE A SUPERCAR AROUND BATHURST. WHETHER IT'S A PRIVATE TEST, OR THE ACTUAL RACE, I DO NEED TO DO IT"**

**Ricciardo feels it's been a smooth start to his McLaren career and is looking forward to any other driving opportunities that may arise**

around Bathurst. Whether it's a private test, or the actual race, I do need to do it. And I think now I have a good opportunity with Zak as a friend and a boss. He's keen to try and get us into the other open-wheelers in the States, the Indycars. So there's a lot to do.

"When I signed with him, over the early phase of last year, we had these conversations and it was thrown in there, 'We should get you to do


the 12 Hours of Bathurst'. If he asked me and it worked logistically, I would say yes."

Now that McLaren is enjoying talking about its past once again – celebrating it, in fact – after so many frigid Ron Dennis years in which pre-Dennis McLaren history was deemed to be unspeakably un-good, having one of the team's F1 drivers compete in a prestigious sportscar event would be a proper callback to history, evoking memories of Bruce McLaren and Denny Hulme dominating Can-Am. Even if Ricciardo views McLaren's antipodean links as nice-to-have, rather than essential, it will please the marque's

passionate and committed posse of fans.

And there's one more thing for Ricciardo to enjoy about his new employ: he can actually drive that 675 LT (upspecced by McLaren Special Operations, no less) he acquired by stealth six years ago rather than keeping it under wraps.

"I had to be a bit discreet, being in the facility," he recalls, "because even walking around Automotive, people might talk. Someone might take a photo or say, 'What's he doing here?'"

"I kind of had to make it very obvious to them that I was buying a McLaren – which made me sound like a right dick!" 



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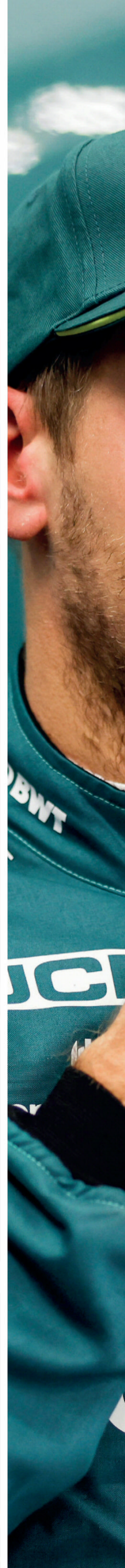
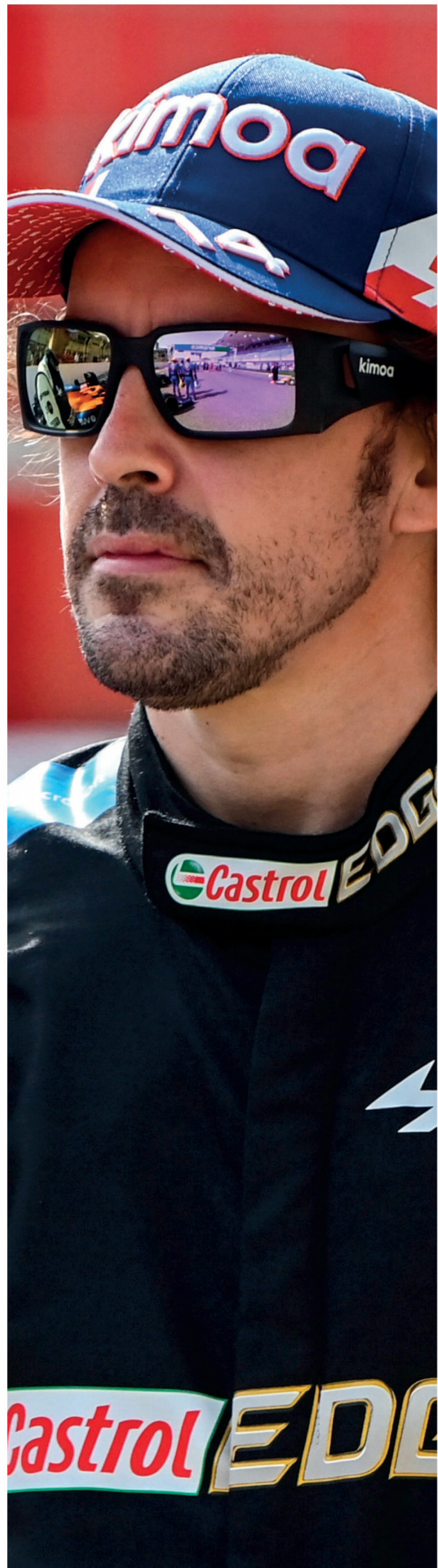
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# TOP OF THE SWAPS

After a pandemic-hit winter of seat-swapping, several drivers made debuts for new teams in Bahrain – plus there were some completely new faces in town, and one driver making his comeback with the team that gave him his big break – and made him a champion...

WORDS BEN ANDERSON

PICTURES





# PÉREZ DOESN'T YET LOOK AN UPGRADE ON ALBON



**ALEX ALBON COULD PROBABLY** allow himself a wry smile. So often last season he was (rightly) castigated for failing to perform at the crucial moments, leaving Red Bull disadvantaged in its battle with Mercedes.

Red Bull replaced Albon with Sergio Pérez because it felt Pérez's experience would make up the deficit, but Pérez's first race with his new team was below par. Impressed by the way Red Bull takes "everything to the limit", Pérez is so far struggling to find the limits of the RB16B himself. Partly, that's to be expected. Pérez himself is on record saying it will take five races to get fully up to speed. But he would have expected to make Q3 and finish fourth as a minimum, and he achieved neither.

"I don't quite feel the car is within me yet," Pérez said after Friday practice. "I still have to think about what's going on. It doesn't seem to be coming naturally over one lap."

The pattern repeated on Saturday, when Pérez missed Q3 by less than four hundredths of a second to Lance Stroll's Aston Martin (palpably a slower car). Pérez lapped within four tenths of Max Verstappen – giving away most of his deficit in Turn 1 alone – but it was nowhere near enough.

Pérez impressed Red Bull with the calm and mature way he rebooted his car following a random shutdown on the formation lap. From there, Pérez raced cleanly and decisively through the field to finish fifth. A decent damage limitation job, but less than expected from a car with a significant pace advantage over everything bar the Mercedes.

"There are some specific problems to the way I'm driving," Pérez admitted after the race. "I have to adjust my driving to the car. It's taking me a while, because it's very different to what I'm used to."

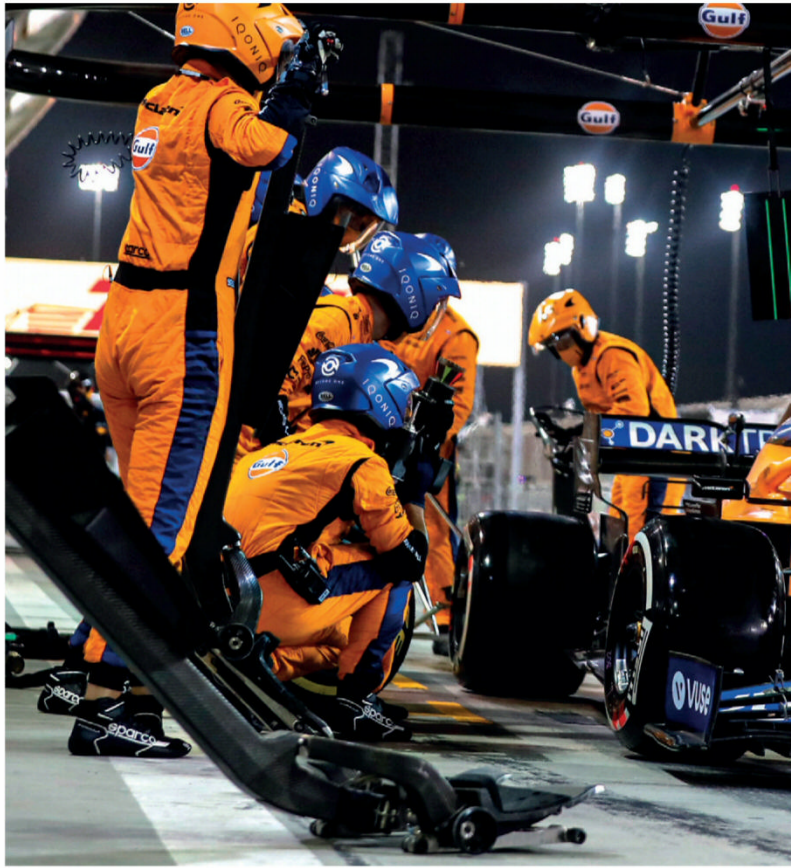
In other words, Pérez needs more time to adapt to a car built around Verstappen's extreme driving style – from a team that has a recent history of impatience. It's down to Pérez to up his game and ensure history does not repeat.

## PÉREZ IN BAHRAIN



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# RICCIARDO IS OUTSHONE BY NORRIS HEROICS



**DANIEL RICCIARDO'S McLAREN** debut was reminiscent of a test cricketer playing himself in. Careful to avoid an embarrassing early duck – or 'doing a Mazepin' as it will surely become known in F1 parlance – Ricciardo drove sensibly and came home with a decent, if unspectacular, result.

Ricciardo adapted quickly to the McLaren's quirks and pipped Lando Norris by less than half a tenth of a second in qualifying. Dan admitted after testing he has work to do to get comfortable with McLaren's braking systems, and it looked as if he doesn't yet fully trust the car in that area given the understeer he appeared to pick up mid-corner.

"I think all of us could jump in any car on the grid and get up to 90%, 95% relatively quickly," he said in the build-up to Bahrain. "But it's then extracting probably the last 5%, that's where you exploit different characteristics of the car. I think extracting that last bit will naturally come over time."

The disappointment for Ricciardo, and to his surprise it seemed, came in the race. He lost out in early wheel-to-wheel combat with team-mate Norris, then struggled to stay with Norris and Leclerc's Ferrari. Ricciardo averaged 0.27s per lap slower than Norris in the second stint (on mediums) and 0.514s slower in the final stint (on hards).

"With everything settled I felt like I would probably progress the most through the race, but it was the opposite," admitted Ricciardo, who later discovered he was carrying floor damage from early contact with Pierre Gasly's AlphaTauri. "I got more out of qualifying than the race and just struggled to



# ALONSO SHOWS HE'S LOST NONE OF HIS FIGHT



## RICCIARDO IN BAHRAIN



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keep pace. I felt like if I lifted my level and pushed my lap times, I could hold it for one or two laps and then it would quickly drop off, so I struggled to really manage the tyres and keep all that sensible.

"I probably don't have a setup yet that I'm really sure of, or love, so I've got some homework, but I'm certainly not discouraged – I wouldn't say it was an exhilarating race or performance, but I feel like we can just get better from here."

**FERNANDO ALONSO HAS BEEN AWAY** from Formula 1 for two full seasons, so a bit of ring rust would be perfectly understandable at this stage. When he began regularly locking brakes and running off track while battling for the lower points paying positions with the likes of Lance Stroll, Sebastian Vettel, Carlos Sainz and Kimi Räikkönen, it looked as though that's exactly what Alonso was struggling with.

As it turned out, Alonso was battling reduced performance resulting from a battery problem in his second stint, before an errant piece of sandwich wrapping paper lodged in a brake duct and overheated the car's system. "This caused some damage, so we retired him for safety reasons," explained Alpine executive director Marc Gené. "It was a very unlucky first race for Fernando considering how strong he looked."

Alonso looked feisty on his return to action, qualifying ninth in a car that looked only a marginal contender for Q3. His first stint was combative, but the fact he was the first runner on a normal strategy to pit suggests the A521 also lacks finesse on this latest generation of Pirelli tyres. Nevertheless, Alonso was clearly ahead of young team-mate Esteban Ocon. Truthfully, it looked as though the old master had never been away...

"I will probably disagree with that – I was not at my 100% I'm sure of that," said Alonso, who described his return to Formula 1 racing as "very emotional". "I had a couple of good battles, but I need to find more pace from myself and find more

confidence – and I need to extract more from the car, the brakes, and execute the start better.

"It was not too bad but there is a lot of room to improve from my side. At the pitstops I think the guys did an amazing job, but my position in the second stop was not right. These are small things and mistakes I keep doing from testing and this first race – but hopefully by race two and three I can perform better personally." ▶

## ALONSO IN BAHRAIN



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# HOW DID THE ROOKIES DO?

The performances of Formula 1's three rookies in Bahrain largely followed the anticipated form book. **Yuki Tsunoda** showcased the adaptability and penchant for rapid learning that has so enthused Helmut Marko by superbly lapping second fastest in Q1, just a tenth behind Max Verstappen. But he then discovered a "strange" feeling on Pirelli's C3 compound medium tyre, failing to progress to Q3 while AlphaTauri team-mate Pierre Gasly was eighth fastest in Q2 (on the same tyre) then fifth overall. Tsunoda was pleased

to finish ninth after a last-gasp lunge on Lance Stroll, but also disappointed with ground lost on lap one, and the time it took to recover. Nevertheless, Gasly was impressed with Tsunoda: "So far a couple of mistakes here and there but when he managed to put things together, he's really fast". And then there was the Haas pairing of **Mick Schumacher** and **Nikita Mazepin**. It was an inauspicious start to life in F1 for Michael's son, who was "95% happy" with qualifying four tenths adrift of Sebastian

Vettel's Aston. Schumacher spun at the exit of Turn 4 early in the race and finished last of the cars still running at the end, but at least banked a race distance to learn from. Team-mate Mazepin returned to Bahrain in a "happy place" after testing, but endured a torrid debut – spinning off the track multiple times in practice and qualifying, then crashing out on lap one with a true rookie error: "My tyres were cold, and I got on the kerb and took too much throttle and spun. Totally my mistake". Surely the only way is up from here...

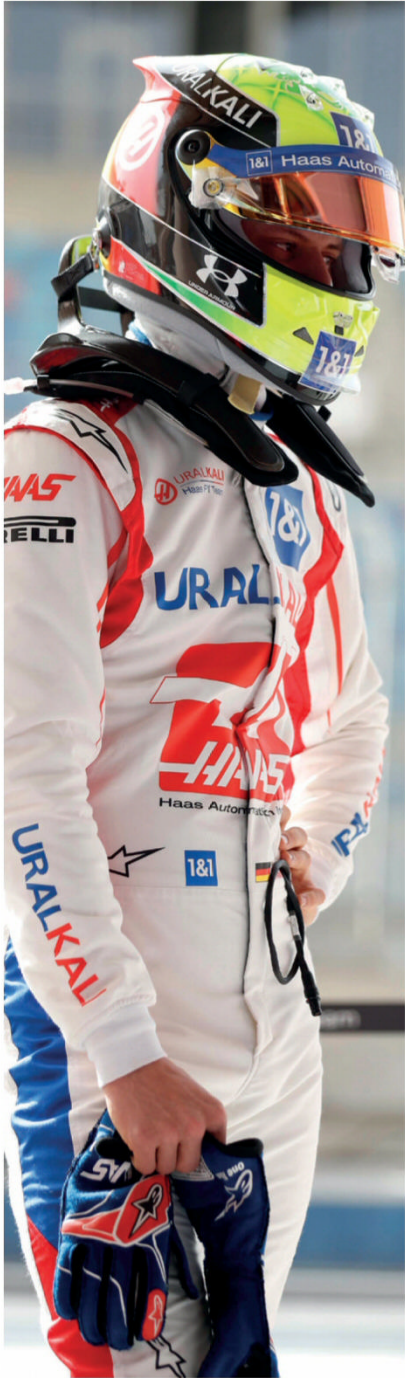
# VETTEL LOOKS ALL AT SEA IN ASTON GREEN



**SEBASTIAN VETTEL'S FIRST RACE** since leaving Ferrari looked nothing short of a catastrophic disaster in the round. Already on the back foot trying to adapt to the now-green 'Pink Mercedes', following gearbox problems in testing, Vettel trailed team-mate Lance Stroll after Friday practice, FP3 and qualifying. We'll never know exactly how close to Stroll's pace Vettel could have got, because his second run



Yuki Tsunoda ★★★★★



Mick Schumacher ★★★★★



Nikita Mazepin ★★★★★

## VETTEL IN BAHRAIN



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# SAINZ MAKES CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC START IN FERRARI RED



in Q1 was derailed by yellow flags, leaving him 18th fastest and eliminated from Q2, but his first run was two and a half tenths slower anyway...

To compound the misery, Vettel was then handed a grid penalty and penalty points on his licence for failing to abandon his timed lap after rookie Nikita Mazepin spun his Haas in the dying moments of Q1.

Judging Vettel's race pace is nearly impossible, considering he was the only driver to attempt to make a one-stop strategy work. Ultimately, it was a failed gamble because Mick Schumacher's Haas was the only car still running at the end that Vettel didn't finish behind. The 10s penalty (plus extra licence points) Vettel received for ramming Esteban Ocon's Alpine at Turn 1 was the lowlight of a trying first weekend for the four-times world champion, who errantly tried to blame Ocon for the incident when it was completely Vettel's fault.

"I'm not at home in the car," said Vettel afterwards, admitting that he did not drive or race well in Bahrain. "There's a lot of things that are fighting me so that I can't really focus on driving. We need to address them and try and fix them."

"There's so many things going on still that break the rhythm and make it quite difficult in terms of feeling the car and feeling what I need to do to drive fast, so there's still a lot to do. I hope we can fix a lot of it very quickly. I think a lot of the things can be addressed – some of them on our side, some of them are not. We'll see going forward. The next couple of races will be very good for us to calm things down."

**OF ALL THE DRIVERS WHO SWITCHED** teams over the winter, Carlos Sainz's performance in Bahrain was probably the most quietly impressive.

He was faster than new Ferrari team-mate Charles Leclerc in FP2 and FP3, and fractionally faster again after the first runs in Q1. That Sainz only just scraped through to Q2 in 15th was more down to the yellow-flag anomalies than any lack of pace on his part. In Q2, Sainz was fastest of all on

the medium tyre, pipping Leclerc by a thousandth of a second.

So far, so impressive – but Q3 "didn't go to plan" for Sainz, who trailed home eighth, well over half a second behind Leclerc, who admitted he was overdriving Ferrari's improved car before qualifying. Sainz didn't make a great start to the race either, dropping behind Fernando Alonso's Alpine and Lance Stroll's Aston on the first lap. Sainz also bounced off Stroll at Turn 10 after a failed attempt to repass, so was fortunate to avoid damage.

But thereafter Sainz settled into a strong rhythm, recovered some lost ground, pulled an impressive double pass on champions Alonso and Vettel, and finished the race within nine seconds and two places of Leclerc. Sainz's pace was decent too – about a tenth per lap slower than Leclerc on medium Pirellis, but half a second faster on hards, with a five-lap offset in Sainz's favour.

Impressive stuff against one of the most highly rated drivers on the current grid. Sainz now needs to work on stringing his whole weekend together.

"Overall, the weekend is stronger than the result feels in race circumstances and qualifying circumstances," Sainz reflected. "I was a bit on the back foot after the first few laps, probably taking a bit of a cautious approach into my first few laps with Ferrari – we just wanted to make sure I finished this race. Once I managed to clear the two slower cars, the Aston and the Alpine, and I managed to get into clean air, I was actually very happy with the car and could extract pace from the car."

## SAINZ IN BAHRAIN



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# THE TRUTH ABOUT *THAT* CONTRACT...

The Formula 1 world reacted with surprise when it learned Lewis Hamilton's long-awaited new Mercedes deal guarantees his presence on the grid only until the end of 2021. Both parties claimed publicly they were happy with the arrangement, but is there more to it than that?

WORDS MARK GALLAGHER PICTURES  **motorsport**  
IMAGES

**I**N the midst of a global pandemic which has claimed over 2.6 million lives, the past winter's agonised speculation over Lewis Hamilton's new contract with Mercedes sometimes felt irrelevant and detached from reality.

Hamilton said as much when asked about a noticeable reduction in social media posts. "I was taking time for myself," he said. "It wasn't the easiest of breaks. I continue to be conscious of what is happening in the world. Posting pictures and celebrating a thing such as a contract being signed is not really important to me."

In the absence of hard news, the vacuum was filled with speculation ranging from a driver and team at loggerheads over money through to claims of Hamilton demanding the right to a 'Verstappen Veto'.

That Max Verstappen might be Brackley-bound to join or replace Hamilton at some point in the next couple of years was given additional credence by no lesser a man than Red Bull team principal Christian Horner, certain – he said – that the Dutch ace is top of Toto Wolff's list of future drivers.

It seems doubtful that Hamilton lost much sleep over this.

That he would re-sign seemed certain, yet when the announcement finally came through on Monday 8 February it raised eyebrows, questions and the intriguing possibility that 2021 might just be the seven-times world champion's final season with the three-pointed star.

Despite the announcement including details of a long-term arrangement for Hamilton and Mercedes to develop a charitable foundation aimed at building on their joint commitment to increasing diversity and inclusion in motorsport, the focus for the world's media inevitably fell on the details of the driver agreement.

So late was this contract renewal that it could not even be described as a one-year deal. ▶

PICTURE: CHARLES COATES



# 'I'M KIND OF IN A FORTUNATE POSITION WHERE I'VE ACHIEVED MOST OF THE STUFF THAT I'VE WANTED TO ACHIEVE UP TO THIS POINT, SO THERE'S NO REAL NEED TO PLAN TOO FAR AHEAD IN THE FUTURE' **LEWIS HAMILTON**

As though in deference to #LH44, only 44 weeks separates the announcement date from the conclusion to the 2021 world championship in Abu Dhabi; 10 months during which Britain's record-breaking Formula 1 driver must determine whether or not to be part of a brave new era determined by Formula 1's forthcoming 2022 regulations reset.

According to Wolff his star driver has the option to continue, yet somehow the negotiations between them resulted in a much shorter extension than anticipated.

An insight into the wider factors impacting the negotiation was revealed in Wolff's admission to the media that "there are uncertainties in the world that affect the way that sport can operate, that have an influence on our revenue, TV monies, on sponsorship income. [At] Daimler, Mercedes is in a huge transformation towards electric mobility, and that means investments. So, we are in a financial reality that is very different to what it was a few years ago."

With Daimler investing £60 billion focused on electrification and digitalisation between 2021 and 2025, and the Formula 1 team subject to the three-year glide path which will take the initial USD\$145m budget cap down to USD\$135m, there is little doubt that Wolff is keen on future driver salaries reflecting a 'new normal'.

The proposed (and controversial) 2023 driver salary cap of USD\$30m is around one-third of the figure

that Hamilton was reported to be demanding, fanciful though that sum appears.

Whatever the exact figure, it is indisputable that the new agreement was exceptionally late in being signed. Late by the standards of any driver



**Marc Hynes (above, left), a part of Lewis's backroom team, and director of Hamilton's Project 44 management business since 2016, moved on to pastures new, adding to a sense of unsteadiness around the negotiations**

contract, never mind the renewal agreement of a man who has won 74 grands prix (at the time of writing) and six world championships for Mercedes since 2014.

For his part, Hamilton dismissed the unusually short contract extension as being symptomatic of a period of uncertainty throughout the world. A time which has caused him to reflect on priorities, including simply racing in 2021 before making longer term decisions.

"I'm kind of in a fortunate position where I've achieved most of the stuff that I've wanted to achieve up to this point," he said at the launch of the Mercedes W12, "so there's no real need to plan too far ahead in the future. We live in quite an unusual period of time in life, and I just wanted one year. Then we can talk about [if] we do more, and keep adding to it if we have to."

Pre-COVID, the position among those closest to Hamilton was that negotiations for 2021 would most likely involve a 'two plus one': a firm two-year extension with an option for 2023, at which time Hamilton will be 38 years of age. Ultimately, Lewis has agreed to a 'one plus one'.

Team boss Wolff was quick to dispel any suggestion of a difficult negotiation and below-par deal for either party.

"We jointly agreed on a one-year deal," he said simply. "First of all, there is a substantial regulation change in 2022. We also want to see how the world develops, and the company, and on the other side because we kept it very late."

The principal culprit in relation to the timing of the deal appears to be the global pandemic in terms of the disruption it wrought within F1 and the direct impact it had on Hamilton and Wolff, both of whom contracted the virus.

PICTURES: CHARLES COATES; STEVEN TEE; MARK SUTTON



Hamilton was struck down by it at the end of November, famously causing him to miss the Sakhir GP and giving George Russell – managed by Wolff, remember – a near-fairy tale opportunity. The Mercedes team principal then announced he had tested positive for the virus after Christmas, forcing him to quarantine at home in Austria.

It was against this backdrop that the already-delayed negotiations became carved out “via video conferencing between Christmas and the end of January,” according to Wolff. “We wanted to discuss the contract at the end of the season between the Bahrain races and then, obviously, Lewis didn’t feel well.”

The timing of Hamilton’s COVID-19 diagnosis could not have been worse; Russell’s Sakhir performance was an unwelcome development prior to proper negotiations getting underway. Although Russell did not become a threat to Hamilton’s seat for this season, he most definitely forms part of his manager’s long-term plans.

The pandemic had already pushed negotiations back several months.

The delayed start to the 2020 season meant those useful face-to-face chats which often take place in the paddocks of Barcelona and Monte Carlo in May never happened.

Once the 2020 season got underway in July, the rhythm to the world championship was more intense than usual – with 17 grands prix compressed into 24 weeks. Negotiating new contracts is ultimately best done away from the spotlight and tension of race weekends, even if general terms have been suggested over a cafe latte or two in the motorhome.

For drivers who appoint a manager to look after their business affairs, regular conversations with team principals are the norm. Hamilton, however, makes his own decisions, and has done since setting up his own ‘Project 44’ management business in London at the end of 2014.



**Hamilton and Wolff enjoy Lewis’s seventh world title in Turkey (above). After this, negotiations were hampered by both contracting COVID-19 and distracted by Russell’s Sakhir display (below)**



Originally managed by his father Anthony, Hamilton spent four years with Simon Fuller’s XIX Group before joining William Morris Endeavour, which helped build his profile in the United States. It was through Project 44 that Hamilton negotiated his contract renewals with Mercedes in 2015 and 2018, however.

A key figure in all this has been Marc Hynes – former racer, friend and confidante to Hamilton as well as a director of Project 44 since January 2016. As gate keeper to the Hamilton management business, Hynes was tasked with handling the myriad enquiries and business opportunities which inevitably come the way of a multiple world champion.

Hynes will undoubtedly have been providing advice during the winter negotiations. It is therefore notable that he and Hamilton have

parted company. Indeed, Hynes’ resignation as a director of Project 44 occurred on 22 January, during the very month in which the renewal talks were taking place...

Although the split has been described as amicable, the timing of that allied to the subsequent lateness and length of the renewal contract suggests a degree of turbulence.

No one operating at Hamilton’s level wants to have short term deals

concluded at the eleventh hour.

His shock decision to quit McLaren and join Mercedes in 2013 was announced in September 2012, for example. That agreement

had a three-year term which was repeated when his second contract with the Silver Arrows was announced at the 2015 Monaco GP – one third of the way into the season.

The next contract renewal was announced in July 2018, on the eve of the German GP, this time for two years covering 2019 and 2020.

To now have an extension which starts and ends within the same calendar year can only be seen as less than ideal. Those three-year deals became two, and now one...

Wolff and Hamilton insist that, this year, they will not leave their discussions so late.

“We have agreed that we want to pick up the discussions much earlier this year,” confirms Wolff, “to avoid a situation like we had in 2020, to run out of time and be in the uncomfortable position that there is no time left before the beginning of the season.”

The option to continue, however worded, clearly requires some further negotiation.

On that basis the next round of discussions between Wolff and Hamilton can only be a short time away. The potential for distraction and tension to disrupt Hamilton’s season is clear, so while both parties remain bullish about the strength of their relationship, it seems clear we are in uncharted water as regards the future of Formula 1’s dominant partnership. 





КТО ЗАВЕРШАЕТ  
ОТТО  
ТВОЯ ФРОНТ





Plucked from his Williams seat to fill in for Lewis Hamilton at last year's Sakhir Grand Prix, **George Russell** proved he was a potential winner given the right car. But he can't afford to sit around waiting for that opportunity to come again – he's going to have to fight to prove himself once more...



# A

sked why he put himself forward for the Grand Prix Drivers' Association director's chair vacated by IndyCar-bound Romain Grosjean, George Russell explains that he wants to "look back in 20 years' time and say I was part of a positive change in Formula 1". It's not what you might expect to hear from a 23-year-old grand prix driver, especially one whose general lot during race weekends over the past two seasons has been a scrabble to get into Q2 and frustrated attempts to scrape into the top 10.

But it says much about how and where George Russell sees himself, and his level of engagement with F1 and the wider world, that he should take on a responsibility some of his more experienced peers have eschewed – and that he has the confidence to operate as one of the chief public faces

of what has become an increasingly vocal body. By dint of their acceptance of Russell in the role, his peers have tacitly but nevertheless explicitly underlined the respect he commands, despite his youth and relatively meagre tally of points.

Obviously, Russell enjoys a position of privilege as a Mercedes junior even though he's driving for a team which has barely troubled the top 10 in recent years. Throughout his two seasons at Williams, he's shown remarkable presence of mind and a solid work ethic, as well as an ever-thicker skin when it comes to the frustrations attendant upon driving cars which are some way short of state-of-the-art. He's also refreshingly open about the strategies he's adopted to maximise his focus on the job, including minimising his interactions on social media ("It doesn't bring me anything positive and I'm better without it," he said in a recent interview with PA), working with a psychologist, and managing his time better.

"I managed to have some nice time off with my family directly after Abu Dhabi – which was needed," he says. "Obviously at that time things were on a downward slope [in terms of the pandemic] and we had the tier system in place in the UK, so I moved back in with my parents rather than my normal place in London. It was just nice to be able to see them because I hadn't seen them all year.

"And then after having those few weeks off it was back in training and I moved home again – I'm now living here with my trainer, who has moved in as he did during the first lockdown. So he's been keeping me on my toes.

"The time has flown by – I was doing a couple of days a week at the Williams factory in Grove, going through simulator preparations, marketing commitments, updating the little bits and bobs we think will help us improve. And then straight into shakedown of the new car and testing it in Bahrain, trying to understand it. So I'm quite glad I had those couple of weeks off after Abu Dhabi!"

Russell says he began working with a psychologist specifically to focus on mental wellbeing during what became a hugely intense 17-round season last year, packed with time shifts and back-to-back events. There will be more of the same over 23 rounds this season, assuming no further cancellations, postponements and rejiggings. To have a public figure pushing back against what's often been taken as a Formula 1 axiom – that more is more – might



PICTURES: GLENN DUNBAR; ZAK MAUGER; WILLIAMS

**Russell took his chance with Mercedes at the Sakhir GP last year very well and would have won the race had the team not made mistakes**







sound revolutionary but it is simple common sense. A balance has to be struck between doing too much and not enough: managing mental and physical energy levels, and prioritising what's important, will enable teams and drivers to operate effectively within those boundaries.

This isn't to say Russell hasn't spent part of the off-season rigorously analysing the minutiae of his 2020 performance, just that he and the new regime at Williams recognise that efficiency can trump duration.

"I had a very long meeting with my engineers," he says, "pretty much a full day, going through race by race: if we were strong, if we were weak, why we were good and why we weren't, and why we decided to go in a certain direction with car setup. Electronics, brake balance, brake migration, engine and differential settings – these are all key factors in the icing on top of the cake, let's say, of performance. My driving style – there were some races ▶

"I had a very long meeting with my engineers, going through race by race: why we were good and why we weren't"



I was stronger and others weaker, and we were just trying to understand why that was. And we went through our own procedures to see if there's anything we can do better.

"It was a long, open, honest conversation, me to my engineers, my engineers to me, about how we can be more efficient. And I think that's the key thing, especially with a 23-race season. Last year it was noticeable, those 17 races were so intense, they went by so quick, people – me included – were tired by the end of the year. So how do we avoid that when we get to the second half of this season and we've got big timezone shifts from Canada back-to-back, triple-headers, and then Australia, then Saudi Arabia?"

"We're making sure we're on top of everything from a physical as well as nutrition perspective, such as getting enough sleep, making sure the work I do with my engineers is efficient and worthwhile. It's easy to fall into the trap of doing more – more training, more simulator work, more meetings – and sometimes too much is unproductive and only fatiguing. Finding that right balance at the start of the season is tricky because you feel the need to put in the extra effort, but it's got to be achieved in absolutely the correct manner, where you're not underdoing it or overdoing it, because you need to be in that sweet spot."

The key challenge Russell faces this season is to maintain peak performance, maximising the potential of the Williams, in order to serve two intertwined purposes. The team's new owners are ambitious and want to see it move forwards, regardless of the development restrictions making this something of an interim season, and Russell can and must be at the forefront of making this happen. While servicing that process he must continue to build his credibility as a potential successor at Mercedes to Valtteri Bottas or Lewis Hamilton, both of whom are on one-season contracts with renewal talks in the immediate offing. George can't waste a single opportunity to put his hand up for one of the most coveted seats in F1.

He has already had a tantalising taste of how that scenario might pan out. Mercedes had two nominated reserve drivers in 2020, Esteban Gutiérrez and Stoffel Vandoorne, though Gutiérrez was no longer eligible for a superlicence. When Hamilton fell victim to COVID-19 ahead of the Sakhir GP, Mercedes boss Toto Wolff chose to negotiate Russell's temporary release from Williams rather than plug Vandoorne in.

This was a clear sign of Wolff looking strategically to the future, given the contractual situation with Hamilton (then still unresolved). Russell's substitution job was little short of

electrifying, for he qualified but a fraction off Bottas and went on to lead the race, which he would probably have won had Mercedes not blown it with a bizarre operational headfart.

Nevertheless, this being F1, there was a constituency of people – generally those bearing curious grievances against Hamilton – who held this up as evidence that anyone could win a grand prix in a Mercedes. Russell, having muted the subject of F1 on social media, reckons not to have heard any of it, though he can understand why some might nurture such fringe beliefs.

"To be honest, following that event, I think I only had positivity," he says. "Obviously it opened the debate of car versus driver but, as Toto said, the best drivers get put in the best car and that's how it's always been.

"You're not going to see a poor driver get given the opportunity in the best car on the grid, and I guess people always think success is easy, but they don't see the work that went into that. They didn't see the work from me, from the second I got the phone call saying this might be happening, that I gave absolutely every second of the day to try and make sure I was ready for that Saturday afternoon and Sunday evening.

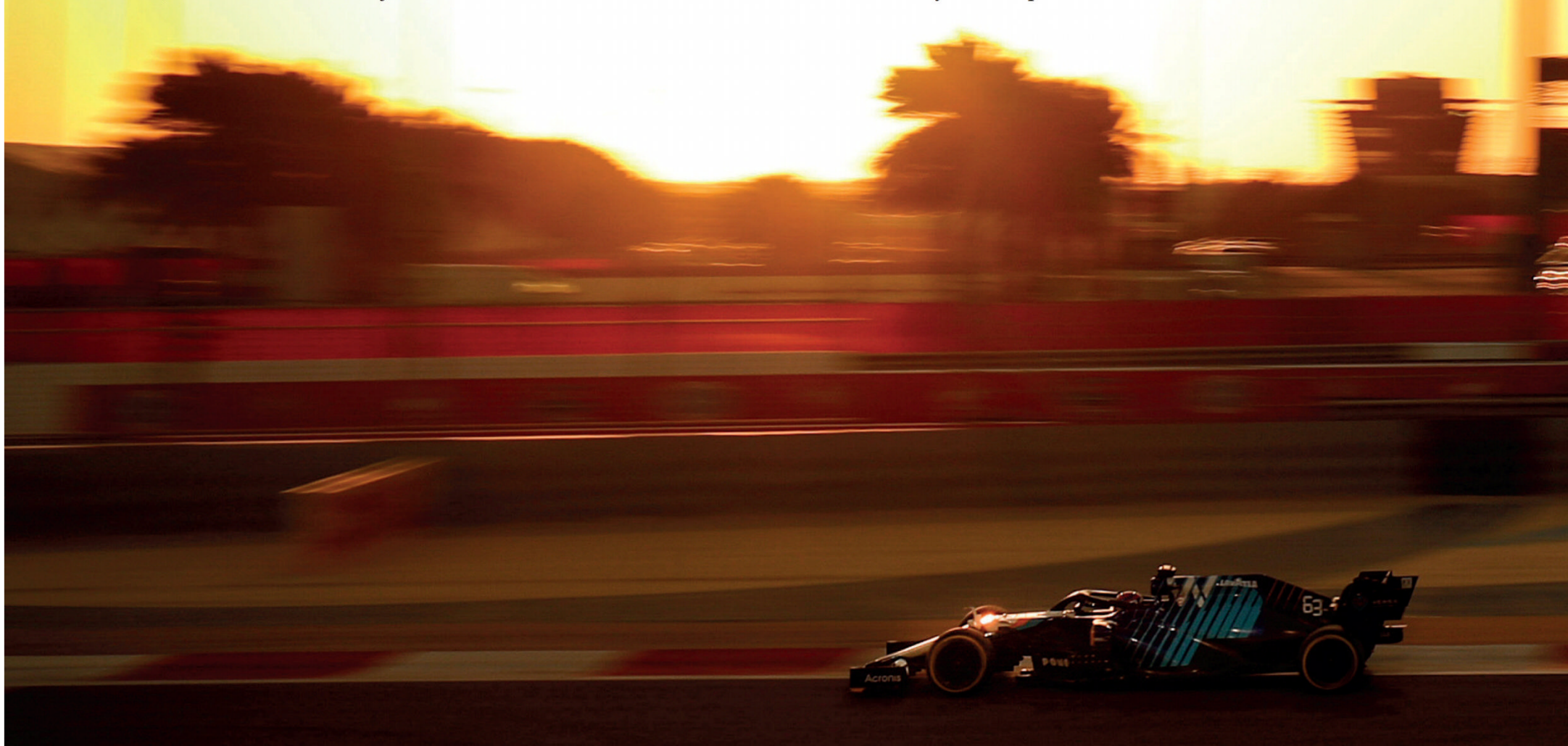
"My engineers and I were at the track daily until getting on for midnight, making sure everything was as well-prepared as possible. Going over absolutely everything. And that's not what people see – they turn on the TV on a Sunday afternoon and see I rocked up, qualified second, went into the lead and should have won the race.

"I've been working my whole life for an opportunity like that. I worked incredibly hard that whole weekend, from the second I had the opportunity, to make sure I took it with both hands and didn't let it slip away from me."

Russell might have come away from the Sakhir GP with only ninth place, three points and some useful experience to show for it, but his weekend performance also served to rebuild his stock, which had slipped somewhat at the Emilia-Romagna Grand Prix a month earlier when he crashed while trying to keep his tyres warm behind the Safety Car. Not only was this a clumsy-looking blunder for a driver whose self-improvement trajectory had seemed to be relentlessly upward, it cost Williams a potential points finish since he was running 10th at the time.

A mistake like this doesn't just provoke schadenfreude among the chattering classes of F1, it introduces doubts into the minds of those who matter – the movers and shakers who shape careers. Especially when a driver is in Russell's position, being a popularly anointed future star but one without much in the way of a competitive barometer in the other car.

**It will be crucial for Russell to stay at the top of his game this season, to remain in pole position should a Mercedes seat become vacant**





**“IN 2020 I WAS A BETTER DRIVER, MORE ROUNDED, AND DRIVING BETTER THAN I WAS THE SEASON BEFORE. AND I’M SURE THIS YEAR I’M GOING TO BE BETTER AGAIN. I THINK I’M STILL ON THE UPWARD SLOPE”**

“The Mercedes experience helped drastically,” says Russell. “Just psychologically, being able to tell myself, ‘You can do this.’”

“I believe in myself, and people say I do a good job, but I guess there was almost an element in my mind, thinking, ‘What if Lewis jumped in a Williams? Would he be in the points every week?’”

“The Mercedes experience, above all, just showed me I’m not at my maximum level yet, but I’ve been doing a good job and when I believe I’ve got the most out of the Williams, I probably have. And psychologically that’s very important.


“I think I’m far from my maximum potential. Each year I drive, I believe I’m the best version of myself, better than the year before. And that’s been happening every year for me, since I’ve been old enough to maturely analyse myself.

“In 2015 I thought I was the best driver and I could go into Formula 1 and conquer the world. I went into 2016 and realised that in 2015 I hadn’t been ready. Same story from 2016 into 2017. And in 2019 I thought I had a good season in F1, I thought I optimised things quite well. But equally, in 2020 I was a better driver, more rounded, and driving better than I was the season before.

“And I’m sure this year I’m going to be better again. I think I’m still on the upward slope.”

He’s going to need to prove that straight away, and carry on proving it, because the political currents are shifting. While Williams continues to be aligned with Mercedes – it receives a discount on engine supply as

quid pro quo for running Russell – and is extending that arrangement to use the Mercedes gearbox this season (and rear suspension from next season), rumours persist that new owner Dorilton Capital is considering a switch to Renault, reforming an alliance which was dominant during the 1990s.

Unlikely as this may sound, if it were to happen, Russell’s position at Williams may be less clear-cut – unless he’s already secured promotion to Mercedes. For a driver who sees his future at the front of Formula 1, now is the time to shine even more brightly. 







# RISING SON

**Yuki Tsunoda** is the first driver born in the 2000s to reach F1 – and he's barely tall enough for his feet to reach the pedals. But Red Bull and Honda have high hopes for their Japanese protégé...

WORDS LUKE SMITH  
PICTURES ALPHATAURI

**D**espite its well-documented passion for motor racing, Japan has produced a mere handful of Formula 1 drivers. Not since Kamui Kobayashi's staccato comeback with Caterham in 2014 has a Japanese driver lined up on a grand prix grid – until now.

As a product of both Red Bull and Honda's junior programmes, Yuki Tsunoda has experienced one of the fastest graduations to F1 since Max Verstappen, going from Japanese F4 to F1 in just three years. He is the first driver born this century to race in F1.

Such a rapid progression can be read one of two ways: either Tsunoda, like Verstappen, has the makings of a star whose time and talent would have been completely wasted in junior formulae; or such haste can be attributed to a need to maintain Honda's interest and focus in the final year before its exit.

Yet the early signs from Tsunoda in F1 have been promising, going some way to validating Red Bull's decision to place him at AlphaTauri, and giving Japan hope that its new rising son could become its next F1 superstar. ▶



**“YUKI MADE REALLY GOOD PROGRESS IN ALL HIS TESTS. HE WAS VERY WELL PREPARED. EVERYTHING IS RUNNING SMOOTH AND WELL, AND WE HAVE A REALLY PROFESSIONAL AND GOOD RELATIONSHIP”**

**FRANZ TOST**

**Tsunoda's diminutive stature meant AlphaTauri needed to modify its car to enable him to reach the pedals**

Tsunoda first appeared on Honda's radar following his success in Japan's karting championships, and he entered the Honda Formula Dream Project in 2016. He finished second on his Japanese F4 debut in a one-off appearance at Suzuka before winning the JAF F4 East title in 2017, and dominated the national championship one year later, winning half of the 14 races and finishing off the podium just three times.

It paved the way for Tsunoda to move to Europe for 2019, coinciding with the first year of Honda's partnership with Red Bull. An impressive display in the end-of-season GP3 test led to a deal with Jenzer Motorsport in the new FIA F3 series alongside races in EuroFormula Open, as well as becoming a fully fledged member of Red Bull's junior programme.

Life in Europe started slowly. Jenzer was hardly an F3 frontrunner (Tsunoda was the only one of its drivers to score points), and the limited window to get up to speed on new circuits posed a steep learning curve. “Most of the tracks I was at for the first time, but there was only one practice before qualifying,” Tsunoda recalls. “You had to perform well in qualifying to get good points. I struggled to adapt to the tracks, so couldn't focus much on car setup.”

But Tsunoda made breakthroughs and learned quickly, making him a regular points-scorer by mid-season. His starring moment came in soaking wet conditions at Monza when he charged from sixth on the grid to win the reversed grid race.

Ninth in FIA F3 might not have been a ringing endorsement to graduate to F2, but Red Bull junior chief Helmut Marko was happy with what he saw. Tsunoda was placed with Carlin for 2020, and tasked with achieving a top-four finish in the standings. It seemed ambitious, but Marko was convinced by Tsunoda's “incredible racing ability”.

And Tsunoda showed that in bagfuls. He cured a “weakness” in qualifying Marko had identified, achieving a pole position during just his second F2 weekend in Austria, and almost won in wet conditions. He showed remarkable maturity, using the experience from his early F3 struggles to ensure his F2 graduation passed seamlessly.

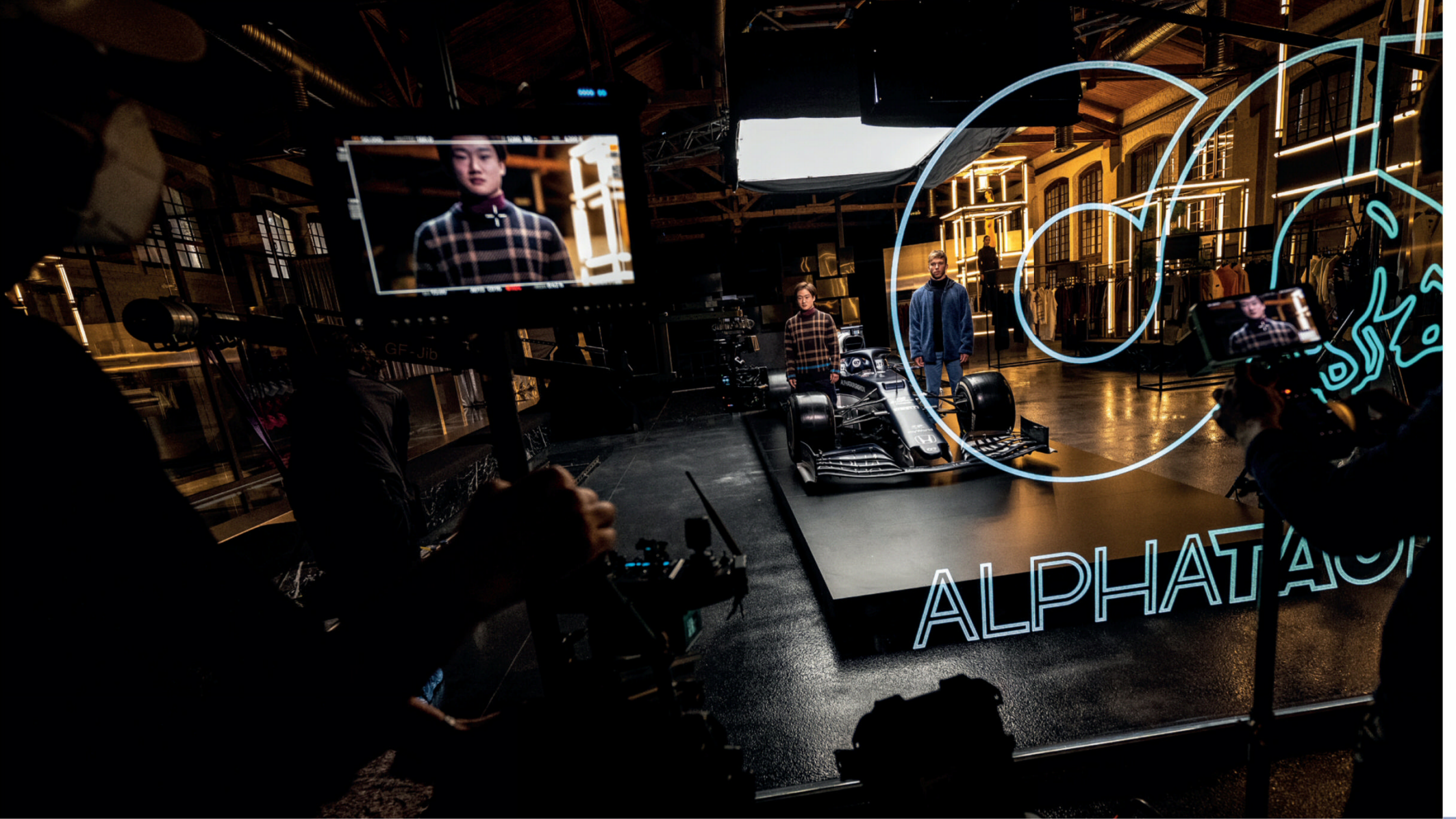
“That hard situation made it better for adapting well in Formula 2,” Tsunoda says. “That experience was really useful, adjusting to the car.”

As Tsunoda closed on a top-five finish to get the required points for an FIA superlicence, Red Bull leapt into action to get him F1 ready. A private test at Imola in an old Toro Rosso car suggested the plan was for him to race with AlphaTauri in 2021, but he didn't let this distract him from F2. He ended the year with victory in the Sakhir feature race and came close to a rare weekend double, finishing second in the sprint event. It meant Tsunoda ended 2020 third in F2; had only feature races counted for points, he would have been champion ahead of Mick Schumacher and Callum Ilott.

Following an outing for AlphaTauri in the Abu Dhabi young driver test, F1's worst-kept secret was announced 10 days before Christmas when Tsunoda was named as Pierre Gasly's







team-mate for 2021, replacing Daniil Kvyat. For Marko, Tsunoda's quality and potential was simply too great to ignore.

Yet no matter how good a young driver may be, making your F1 debut in 2021 of all years was an unenviable task given the limited time available in the Bahrain test – just three days. AlphaTauri sought to aid Tsunoda's acclimatisation by conducting further tests at Imola and Misano, and his conduct impressed team principal Franz Tost. "Yuki made really good progress in all his tests," Tost says. "He spent a lot of time talking to the engineers, so they could instruct him with all the technical details. He was very well prepared. Everything is running smooth and well, and we have a really professional and good relationship."


Tsunoda also worked hard to embed himself within AlphaTauri over the winter. Not wishing to return to the UK amid tough COVID-19 restrictions and quarantine rules, Tsunoda spent all of January and February in Italy, allowing him to get to know everyone at Faenza.

Gasly was quickly impressed by his new team-mate. "He's a nice guy," he says of Tsunoda. "He's funny and easy-going. Everything went very well. He's really talented, with what he's shown in the lower series, and very quick to adapt himself to the new cars and championships. That's a good quality to have in Formula 1."

And this ability to adjust swiftly, a trait ingrained in Tsunoda through those difficult months in Europe, was clear in pre-season testing. On the final day he put in a solid race simulation in which he got quicker and quicker, then during some late qualifying runs he racked up some of the best times of the day. Tsunoda finished second overall, trailing Verstappen by just 0.093s. Seeing his star juniors finish 1-2 pleased Marko, and he hailed Tsunoda's display as "sensational". DRS shenanigans aside, what's all the more impressive is that Tsunoda was not quite comfortable in the AlphaTauri cockpit – at 5'2" he's considerably shorter than Kvyat, and modifications had to be made to enable him to reach the pedals.

Aged 14 Tsunoda was at Suzuka, watching as Verstappen made his F1 race weekend debut in FP1. Now he is tasked with emulating that same precocious talent. But it's a challenge Tsunoda is ready to take in his stride. "Max performed very strongly in his rookie year," Yuki says. "I hope I can have it like that rookie season this year."

It will be at Suzuka where Tsunoda will feel his full status as Japan's next F1 hero, but he's already getting a taste for it. "I receive lots of messages from Japanese fans on social media," he says. "I know already how they feel. There was no Japanese F1 driver for seven years, so they're definitely excited. And I am as well. I'm really looking forward, especially to Suzuka, to drive an F1 car in front of the Japanese fans."

As Honda prepares to bid farewell to F1, the nation's future in grand prix racing lies largely in Yuki Tsunoda's hands. But if he can harness the lessons of his junior career and adjust to life at the highest level as quickly as he has done previously, Tsunoda could be ready to shoulder the responsibility for keeping Japan's passion for F1 on the boil. 

**Choosing to stay in Italy for all of January and February, ahead of the team launch, helped Tsunoda to integrate at AlphaTauri**



**Tsunoda adjusted quickly to the lack of track time available to him at Bahrain's pre-season test and finished second quickest**



# NO THE HISTORY OF LOTUS GOING PART 1: 1957-60 BACK

Formula 1 wasn't an immediate priority for Lotus founder Colin Chapman – but once he got a taste for it he just couldn't stop...

WORDS DAMIEN SMITH

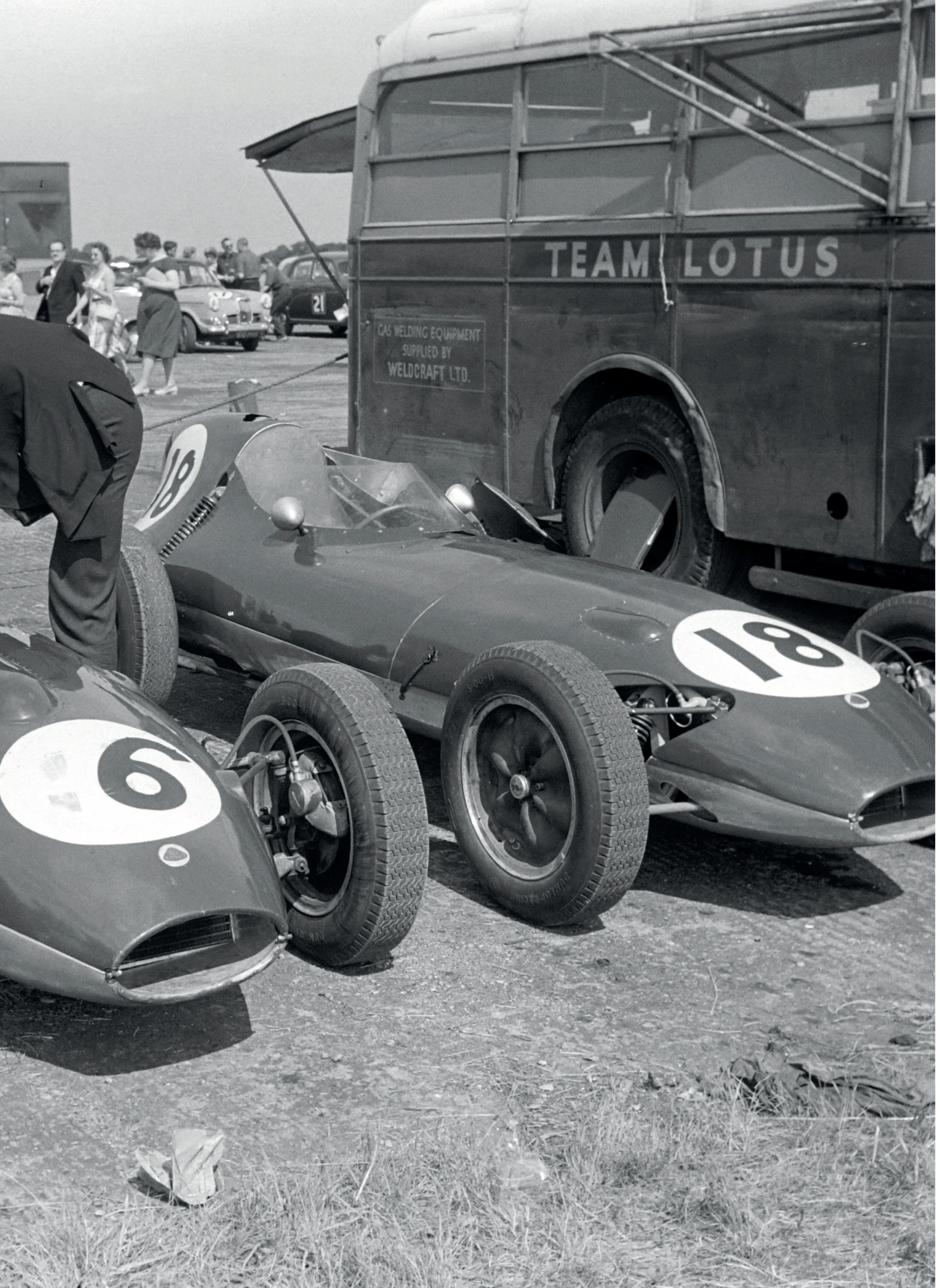
PICTURES



**motorsport**  
IMAGES











**F**or a man who initially had little interest in Lotus pursuing a future in Formula 1, you could say Colin Chapman made quite an impression on grand prix racing. Britain's answer to Enzo Ferrari? Absolutely – for better and for worse. Half a century ago, BRM was considered the British equivalent to those “bloody red cars”, largely because it also built the engines that powered its chassis (albeit much less effectively most of the time).

But with hindsight it was always Lotus which deserved that mantle, given the scope, influence and style of its striking road car output, its range of racing sports cars and single-seaters, and

predominantly its rate of phenomenal success in F1, the highlights of which were achieved in the span of just two decades of rapid technological and commercial revolution. Even now, Chapman's Lotus is still equal fourth with Mercedes on constructors' world championships won (seven), fifth on grand prix wins (79) and it carried five of F1's greatest drivers to six world titles – Jim Clark (twice), Graham Hill, Jochen Rindt, Emerson Fittipaldi and Mario Andretti.

The influence, charisma and genius of the man at the tiller was the driving force behind it all. Team Lotus – the *real* Team Lotus – survived its founder by a dozen years, then fell off the Formula 1 grid a full 27 seasons ago. And yet no matter how poorly served the name has been treated in the decades since, Lotus will always

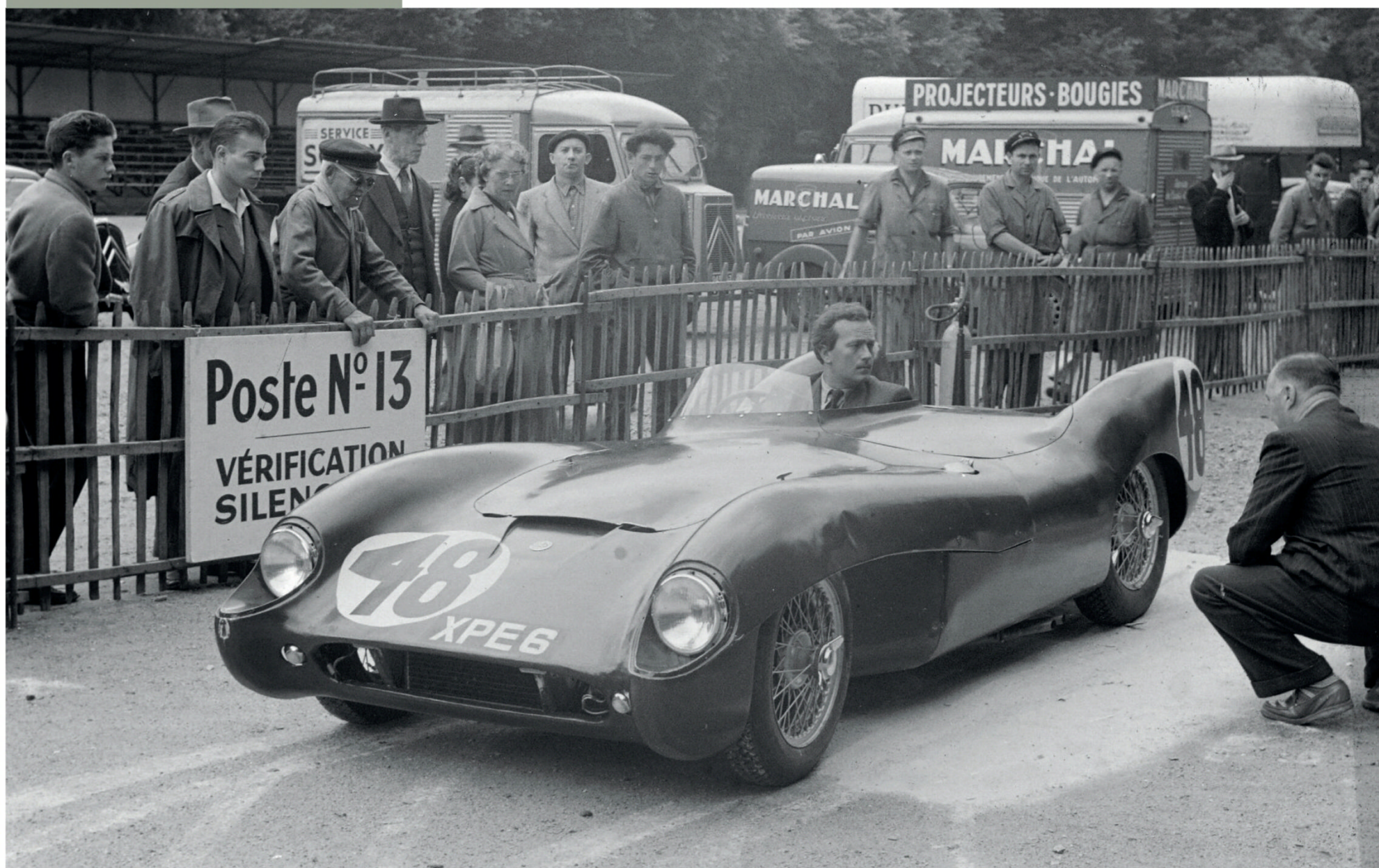
be ingrained in the fabric of F1 – because of Anthony Colin Bruce Chapman.

He was born on 9 May 1928, the son of Stan Chapman, who ran the Station Hotel in Hornsey, North London, where Colin founded Lotus in 1952. He'd qualified as a civil engineer at University College London, having also learned to fly during his time as a student, and briefly served in the RAF. That passion for aircraft would heavily colour his ethos on car design. Wife Hazel, whom Colin met at a dance in 1944, put up the £25 he needed to establish Lotus, which was soon creating a stir on the new breed of British race tracks with a series of specials and light-weight sports racers. It didn't hurt that the boss was a handy pedaller himself and would likely have made the F1 grade, had he been so inclined.

Instead, his fierce ambition drove him towards ground-breaking design and engineering. Before Lotus backed into the grand prix arena, Chapman's already well-regarded expertise on multi-tubular spaceframe chassis and suspension design had led industrialist Tony Vandervell to commission him to take a fresh look at his



Chapman was a decent racer and twice competed in the Le Mans 24 Hours (below, in 1955), and at national level (above, with Stirling Moss at Oulton Park)







Vanwall grand prix cars, which in harness with aerodynamicist Frank Costin's teardrop-shaped body clinched the inaugural F1 constructors' title in 1958. He was also consulted by BRM designer Peter Berthon for the P25 that turned British Racing Motors from national embarrassment to grand prix winner in 1959. But by this time Chapman had his own designs on F1 success, even if he needed a shove or two to get going.

The flyweight Lotus 12, unveiled behind the

Chapman and Lotus executives celebrate the opening of the new factory for road cars and the race team at Cheshunt in 1959

Station Hotel in October 1956, was little more than a potential bit of good business for the new 1.5-litre Formula 2 that was to be launched in 1957. Created in collaboration with John Lambert and Mike Costin – Frank's brother and the future 'Cos' of Cosworth – the Type 12 had a dry weight of just 620lb and was powered by a front-mounted 141bhp Coventry-Climax FPF four-cylinder – for a potent power-to-weight ratio of 451bhp per ton. It featured Girling disc brakes, double wishbone front suspension, magnesium-alloy 'wobbly web' wheels, and a prop-shaft dropped as low as possible to keep the centre of gravity down. Then to transmit



It was Cliff Allison who made F1 take notice of Lotus. Sixth at the 1958 Monaco and Dutch GPs, he then finished fourth in the Belgian GP



The team's world championship F1 debut was at the 1958 Monaco Grand Prix with Graham Hill (above) and Cliff Allison in Lotus 12s

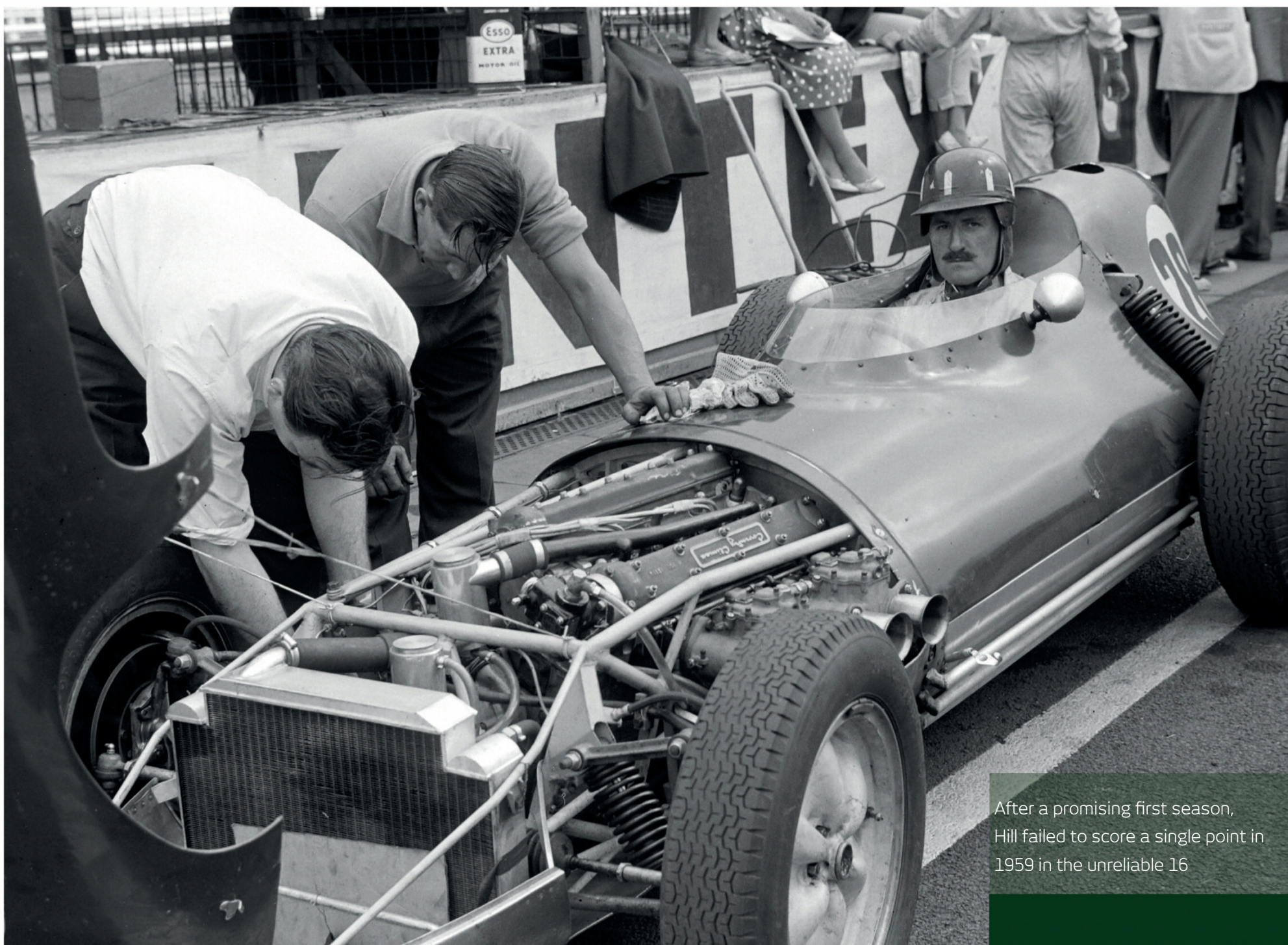
its power was a five-speed motorcycle-style sequential gearbox, but with a 'migratory' change (in other words, the shifter moved as you changed up rather than flicking back to a central position). Mike Costin dubbed it the 'queerbox' ('50s context, people). In short, the hallmarks of future Lotus glory – light-weight innovation born from original thinking – was in place from the start. Puff hard enough and the type 12 looked like it might blow away.

A restricted 1957 F2 campaign made little impression, as Cooper in the UK and Ferrari and Porsche on the continent made the running. That Lotus Achilles' Heel of niggling unreliability ►





Jim Clark made his F1 world championship debut with Lotus in the 1960 Dutch GP at Zandvoort



After a promising first season, Hill failed to score a single point in 1959 in the unreliable 16



was established early too. Gearbox troubles, half-shafts that knotted themselves and worrying chassis cracks in the thin-gauge tubing left Graham Hill, Cliff Allison, Keith Hall and Eltham off-licence owner Dennis Taylor, in the first customer car, with little to show for their efforts.

But Chapman was learning and also displayed another canny attribute that would stick: a great instinct for who to hire to make Lotus better. University of London graduate Keith Duckworth – later the ‘worth’ of Cosworth – came on board in 1957 and quickly made a difference on gearbox reliability. Still, there was little yet to suggest Lotus was about to become a grand prix powerhouse, especially as Chapman had other seeds to sow. Production of his pretty two-seater type 14 coupé, better known as the Elite, was of greater priority. But pressure from his racing drivers, plus the increasing might of Coventry Climax and its over-sized F2 engines in grand prix racing, pushed Chapman to dip a toe. At Silverstone’s International Trophy on 3 May 1958 Hill drove a prototype 1960cc Lotus 12 ‘F1’ to eighth place, while Allison was first F2 car home in sixth. The first world championship start came next, at Monaco, where Allison again managed sixth despite having to get out and push, then repeated the result at Zandvoort for

## CHAPMAN WAS LEARNING AND ALSO DISPLAYED ANOTHER CANNY ATTRIBUTE THAT WOULD STICK: A GREAT INSTINCT FOR WHO TO HIRE TO MAKE LOTUS BETTER

the Dutch GP, with Climax’s bigger 2207cc unit. There was no going back now.

It was Allison rather than 29-year-old mechanic-turned-driver Hill who first put Lotus on the F1 map. In that 1958 season the quiet Cumbrian scored a fine fourth at Spa and starred at the Nürburgring in a patched-up

car Hill had crashed in practice. From the back of the grid Allison could have finished second had his radiator not sprung a leak, but then was lucky to escape injury when he wrote off his new type 16 in a practice crash at Oporto. Still, he took the start in a Centro Sud Maserati 250F and the teams shared the start money. Different world. Such were Cliff’s performances that world champion Mike Hawthorn, who would die in a road accident early in 1959, recommended him to Ferrari for the next season. It could have been the opening knockings of a great F1 career, only for two serious accidents in consecutive years – the second in a customer Lotus – to push Allison into early retirement.

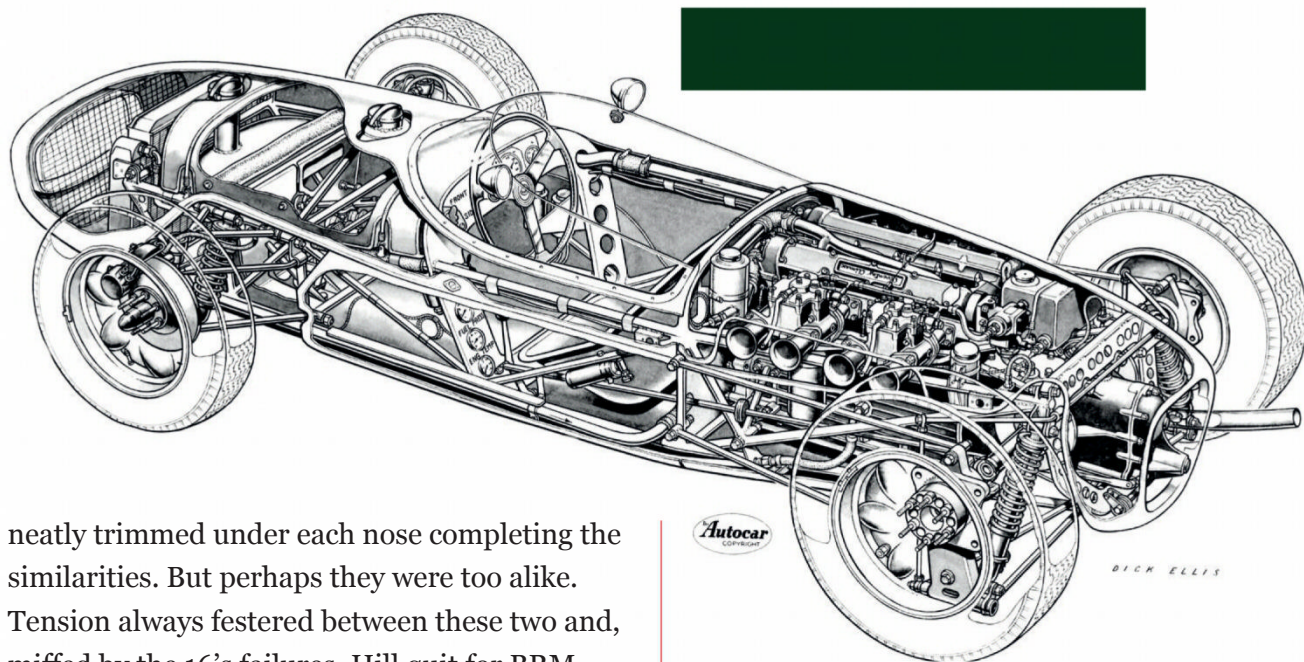
Allison’s departure for Ferrari in 1959 thrust Graham Hill and a Scot called Ireland to centre stage, as Lotus pressed on with its ‘mini Vanwall’. The wider and stiffer type 16 broke cover mid-1958 and was a fair step on from the rudimentary 12, but it was still an F2 car adapted for F1. Like its bigger Vanwall ‘brother’ which was carrying Stirling Moss, Tony Brooks and Stuart Lewis-Evans to constructors’ glory up front, the 16 matched a Chapman frame to a svelte Frank Costin body clothed in a Williams & Pritchard shell made from the lightest 22-gauge aluminium sheet. Good results for the 16 were scarce that first season, but Hill ended his string of DNFs with a sixth at Monza. Now he was motoring – wasn’t he? Well, not exactly.

The 1959 season again offered slim pickings – in fact Graham didn’t score a single point. Hill and Chapman were much alike in manner and get-up-and-go ambition, the spiv-like ‘tache ►

From left to right: Chapman and his talented trio of drivers for 1960, Innes Ireland, Jim Clark and Alan Stacey







neatly trimmed under each nose completing the similarities. But perhaps they were too alike. Tension always festered between these two and, miffed by the 16's failures, Hill quit for BRM. He'd be back seven years later after a torrent had flowed under bridges for both.

American Pete Lovely at first lined up alongside Hill in 1959. But after the International Trophy he arrived in Monaco to find his car had not: the transporter broke down. A disenchanted Lovely went home. He'd finally drive a Lotus in

The Lotus 18, which Chapman said was his first proper F1 car, was a game-changer for the team

a world championship grand prix 10 years later, when he finished seventh in Canada in a self-entered type 49B...

In Lovely's place stepped up larger-than-life Innes Ireland. Fourth on his grand prix debut at Zandvoort boded well, but then in an F2 race at Rouen Innes lost his brakes, hit a bank at about

Ireland claimed Lotus's first F1 victory in April 1960 at Goodwood's non-championship Glover Trophy



100mph, launched through some tree tops and down a 60ft ravine. He escaped down a tree with his car stuck on its nose, engine still ticking over.

Like Hill, Ireland experienced a string of alarming failures. At AVUS, the Climax in his 16 dropped on to the road... then on the grid at Lisbon he noticed his front wheels were at odd angles. Never mind: nothing a spot of welding on the grid couldn't fix. More welding was required at Monza, where the use of the lethally bumpy banking led to multiple cracks in the 16's frame. In the race, he sensed something was wrong: the chassis was breaking in two. But with Hill off to BRM, Innes was still game – especially with the promise of what was to come. Elite production had properly kicked in and a move in October 1959 to a new factory in Delamare Road, Cheshunt showed intent. Time to take a proper crack at F1 and knock Cooper from its perch.

Chapman always said the 1960 type 18 was his first true F1 car, although the boxy design served as a production Formula Junior and F2 as well. Ace draughtsman Len Terry had been recruited and quickly improved the rigidity of the 16, and those lessons – plus the constant stream of Chapman experimentation that pock-marked those first two F1 seasons – all went into the 18. Fully clothed in Williams & Pritchard glass fibre, the car mimicked the world title-winning Coopers in pitching its Coventry-Climax from the nose to behind the driver's shoulders, but that was where the comparison ended. When its tightly fitting skin is removed, the huge 22-gallon fuel tank positioned over the driver's legs startles modern eyes (and probably period peepers too). But with a second 9.5-gallon tank wrapped behind the driver, the whole fuel load was stored within the wheelbase to stabilise handling and weight distribution. The 18 moved the game on and the penny quickly dropped for everyone.

The new car made its debut in Junior guise at the 1959 Boxing Day meet at Brands Hatch, before an aluminium-bodied prototype F1 headed for Argentina – where Ireland would carry Lotus to the lead of a GP for the first time, before inevitable gremlins set in. He finished sixth with a shattered brake disc and only one wheel steering properly, but the point had been made in more ways than one. On the flight home, John Cooper and Jack Brabham plotted a direct response to the new threat from Cheshunt: the T53, forever after known as the Lowline.

Back in England, Ireland scored a first F2 win for Lotus at Oulton Park, then 16 days later caused a sensation at Goodwood which confirmed Cooper's worst fears: Innes defeated, of all people, Stirling Moss not once, but twice, in both F2 and F1. At least it gave the world's ►





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most famous racing driver a good look at the little Lotus from the best possible vantage point – and he immediately told his friend and team patron Rob Walker to place an order, with a heavy heart. Stirling liked ‘old man’ Charlie Cooper and his son John, and remained wary of ‘Flash’ Arry’ Chapman. But with fuel sponsor clashes blocking his path to a Cooper Lowline, Stirling knew he needed an 18 to end his world championship hoodoo. Coopers were more comfortable to drive, he’d say – but the knife-edge, fragile Lotus was faster.

Ireland rubbed it in with victory at the International Trophy, but Moss and Walker had their 18 all ready to go for Monaco. Finished in the Scots whisky heir’s smart blue with white stripe, it would be Stirling’s 18 which would beat the works cars to the punch, claiming a remarkable straight-out-of-the-box first world championship grand prix victory for the marque, at the most famous race of them all. But for

The first world championship win for a Lotus went to Stirling Moss at the 1960 Monaco GP (below and top), in a Rob Walker-entered 18

Lotus this bright and shiny start to the new decade was about to be swamped in gloom. Brabham hit back at Zandvoort, before F1 arrived at the horror story that was Spa 1960.

First, a lost wheel caused by hub failure sent Moss into a high-speed crash in practice, leaving him with broken legs, pelvis and back – and another title chance lost. Almost simultaneously Mike Taylor was severely injured when he crashed the Argentine aluminium car into trees when the steering-column weld failed. In the race worse was to follow. Young works driver Alan Stacey, a remarkable character who made it to F1 with an artificial lower right leg, perished in another 18 – although this time through no fault of his car. It’s thought he hit a bird. And then promising Chris Bristow died in another grizzly accident, driving a Yeoman Credit Cooper. As Brabham scored a joyless victory, the F1 novice who finished fifth in just his second GP blanched in abject shock. Jim Clark was always brilliant at Spa, but no wonder he always hated the place.

In the wake of the Belgian tragedies, Brabham and Cooper swept to second consecutive world titles. But the momentum was shifting to Lotus. Joining ‘handy’ Scottish sheep farmer Clark was another somewhat better-known F1 newcomer.

It beggars belief today, but as John Surtees

embarked on his four-wheeled racing career he dovetailed this new pursuit with sixth and seventh world motorcycle crowns (350cc and 500cc), and the first motor race for cars he

## FOR LOTUS THIS BRIGHT AND SHINY START TO THE NEW DECADE WAS ABOUT TO BE SWAMPED IN GLOOM

saw was the one he was driving in, when his Ken Tyrrell-run Cooper Formula Junior was narrowly beaten by Clark’s Lotus at Goodwood. Razor-edged Chapman was quick off the mark to sign him, and at the British GP – just his second F1 world championship start – Surtees finished second. He then led at Oporto, until he was caught out by the street track’s tramlines... A new F1 star was born.

Now with

both Clark and Surtees on his books, Chapman revelled in an embarrassment of riches – but with a characteristic lack of consideration for Ireland, who won his third non-championship F1 race of the season at Snetterton. That Goodwood double must have seemed a distant memory by season’s end when Moss, who had somehow returned to race in Portugal just eight weeks after Spa, beat him at Riverside for the US GP (yes, Rob Walker claimed Lotus’s second grand prix win as well as its first). Nose out of joint, Innes fell out with Surtees, a sensitive soul who resolved the dispute by walking out on Chapman. John would acknowledge in hindsight it was naïve. Then again, Surtees had no way of knowing that in the early throes of his first season he’d just stepped away from the best F1 car advantage he’d ever experience (even if the thing was too bloody fragile).

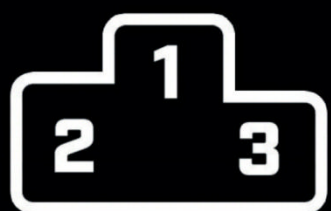
But could John really have continued as Chapman’s muse? No way. Both were too prickly, too head-strong to have co-existed in the same space for long. Instead, the boss’s beam fell directly on the relatively placid, almost super-naturally talented Clark. It was the relationship that would define a decade.





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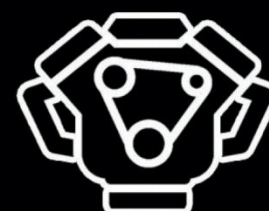


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# NIGEL ROEBUCK'S FORMULA ONE HEROES

## FRANK GARDNER

PICTURES  **motorsport  
IMAGES**

STRICTLY,  
I'M AWARE  
THAT FRANK  
GARDNER...

...doesn't belong in a series called 'Formula 1 Heroes', as he would have been the first to acknowledge. As far as Formula 1 is concerned, his résumé runs to only eight grands prix starts, plus a handful of non-championship races, all of them – save the 1967 Oulton Park Gold Cup, when he drove a factory Brabham – in uncompetitive cars.

Undoubtedly, he had the talent for an F1 career, but perhaps more than any other racing driver I have known, Gardner was a down-to-earth realist. "I liked the idea of F1 as much as anyone – but not at any price. In something competitive, yes please, but I never could see the sense in driving a third-rate car, starting near the back, just so you could tell the world you were an F1 driver – and nowadays half these blokes seem to be paying for the privilege! I mean, what's the point?"

Good question, it seemed to me at the time, and one that still might reasonably be put to all but a handful of the 20 drivers now.

"I suppose I preferred to be a big fish in a smaller pond," Gardner went on, "in the sense that I always needed to think, going into a race, that I could win it." And – F1 apart – winning was something he did a lot. In show business they talk about 'jobbing actors', and it might be said that Frank was a jobbing driver, albeit a superior one,



Gardner in the uncompetitive Willment Brabham BT11 at Spa in 1965. He retired after only three laps...



Gardner always liked to go into a race thinking he could win. That was never the case in F1 and the reason for a short career at the top

who could turn his hand to anything.

He won the European Formula 5000 title in 1971, and three times the British Saloon Car Championship; in 1967 he was runner-up in the European F2 Championship, in the heyday of the Tasman Series was a frontrunner, drove for Ford at Le Mans, even briefly tried his hand at NASCAR. Gardner drove *everything*, and with conspicuous success.

As well as that, thanks to his wonderfully laconic sense of humour, he was a journalist's dream. In my very early days, on a dank November afternoon in 1972, I trailed to Snetterton, where he was testing his Camaro. It was getting dark by the time he parked for the day, and in the drizzle we repaired to the paddock café – no Café Royal – for a chat.

The environment could hardly have been less conducive to levity, yet I laughed more than in any other interview I have ever done. You were allowed to do that back in the day, and I quoted Frank verbatim, leaving nothing out. His remarks didn't raise a blip at the time,



but in today's woke world some, I fear, would provoke apoplexy.

In what was an infinitely more perilous period of racing than now, Gardner was, above all, a survivor. He was at his best, I found, when reminiscing about really bad cars, and when I think of him now, what instantly comes to mind is the original Porsche 917. In time, of course, it became an iconic racing masterpiece, but in early 1969 was so lethal that none of the contracted Porsche drivers wanted to go near it.

"Very early on," Brian Redman remembered, "I got a call to come and test the 917, and I thought, 'Hmm, they've got 10 drivers in the team – why do they want me?' So I said I had some very important business, but I'd see if I could put it off, and I'd call them back in an hour. I rang Siffert: 'Seppe, have you tested the 917 yet?' 'No, no, Brian – not me. We let the others find out what breaks first!'"

Thus it was that, as the Nürburgring 1000kms approached, Gardner got a call. "The money they were offering was certainly good enough to cross a strip of water and get in the thing. I shared the car with David Piper, and after one lap in practice he was all for going back to England, but I pleaded with him to stay because the money was right."

The early 917 had an alloy space-frame chassis, which was gas-filled, and in the cockpit was a large gauge which measured the pressure. "If it zeroed, they said, that meant that the chassis was broken, and I should drive *mit* [with] care back to the pits. I decided that if it zeroed I wasn't going to drive it *mit* care anywhere – I was going to park the bastard there and then, pick up my


Deutschmarks and get home to Mum.

"Then there was the engine – you had about 300 horsepower at 5000 revs, and then between 5000 and 6000 you picked up another 300! So it was a bit of delight, really, and it was on narrow nine-inch rims all round. The computer had said they would make the car very quick in a straight line – but the computer wasn't strapped in the cockpit up in the Eifel mountains, where you tend to get the odd corner..."

Nor was that the end of it. "You sat between these pannier tanks, which bulged when they put the 40-odd gallons of fuel in. On top of all that, even with ear plugs, the engine was loud to the point of being disturbing. Literally, it was bloody hard to think – you were horrified by all the activity, your brain numbed by the vibration, the power and the wheelspin. The chassis flexed so much that the actual position of the gearchange would change – you'd reach for where the lever had been last time you used it, and it wasn't there!"

"It was simply indescribable, the motor car, and the weather did its best to help, as well. Snow and rain all the way. But we got it through to the end, seventh or somewhere – and in addition to paying me, they tried to take up a collection for an Iron Cross, which they reckoned I'd earned..."

There followed an invitation to drive the 917 at Le Mans in June, but Gardner decided against. "The money was great, but I'd learned my lesson. Rolf Stommelen went like hell with the thing, but he had the whole of the Fatherland on his back, and had to rise to the occasion. Like I always said, I never wanted to be the quickest bloke in motor racing, just the oldest – and that car was certainly going to interfere with those plans. You don't make any money in hospital..."

A trip to Australia every year for the grand prix, used unfailingly to include a catch-up with Frank Gardner, one of those racing people you truly miss. At 78, he died in Sydney in 2009. 

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I NEVER  
WANTED TO BE  
THE QUICKEST  
BLOKE IN MOTOR  
RACING, JUST  
THE OLDEST

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Gardner at the Nürburgring in 1965. That was his only full-ish season of F1 when he competed in seven of the 10 races

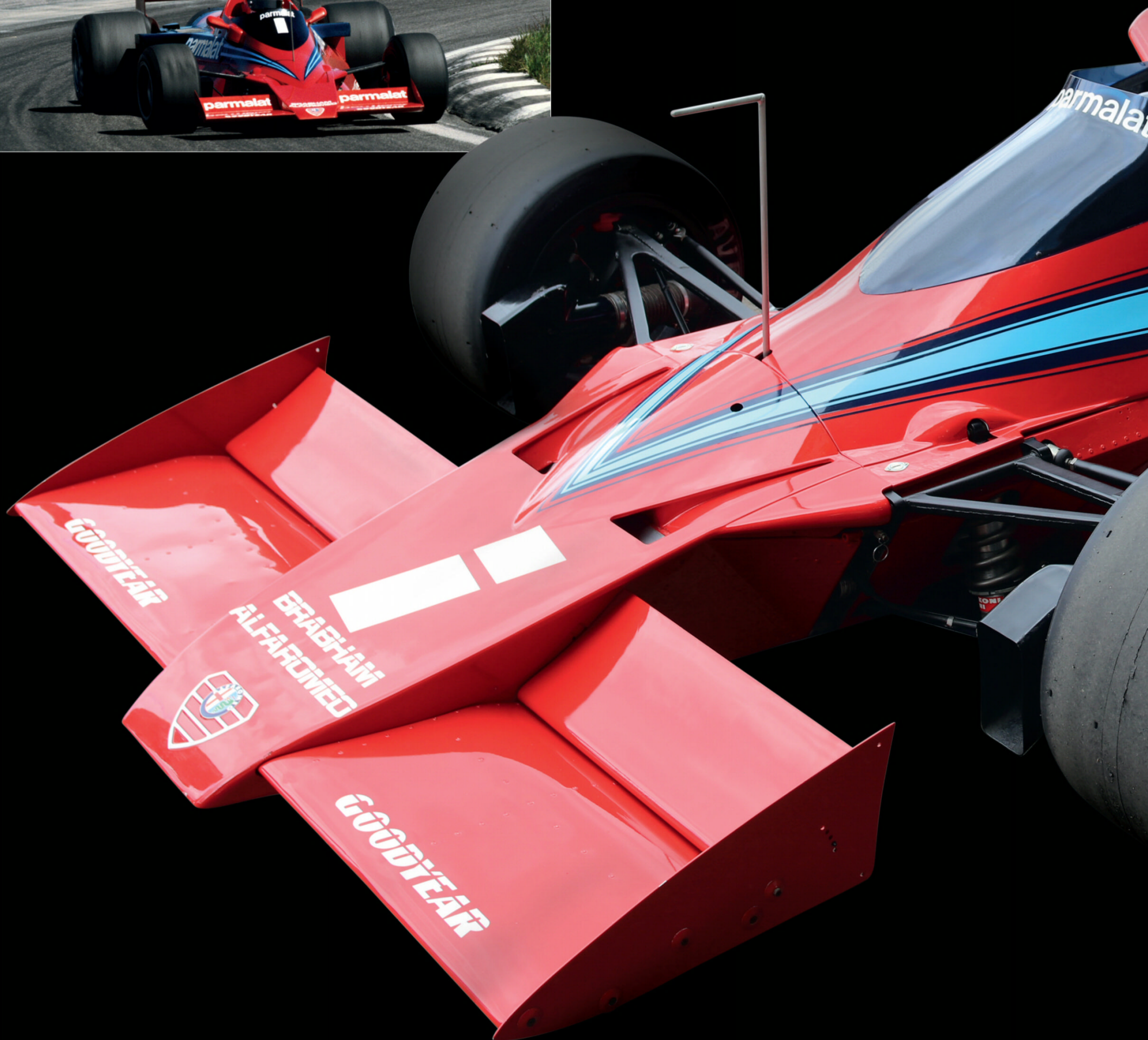




# BRABHAM



The car that raced once, won once, then vanished – or did it?



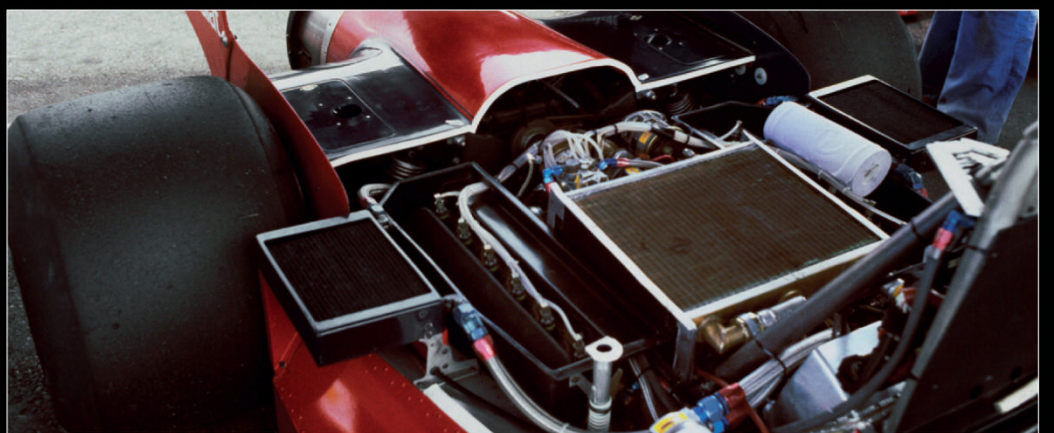


# BT46B

NOW  
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No. 97

WORDS  
STUART CODLING  
PICTURES  
JAMES MANN





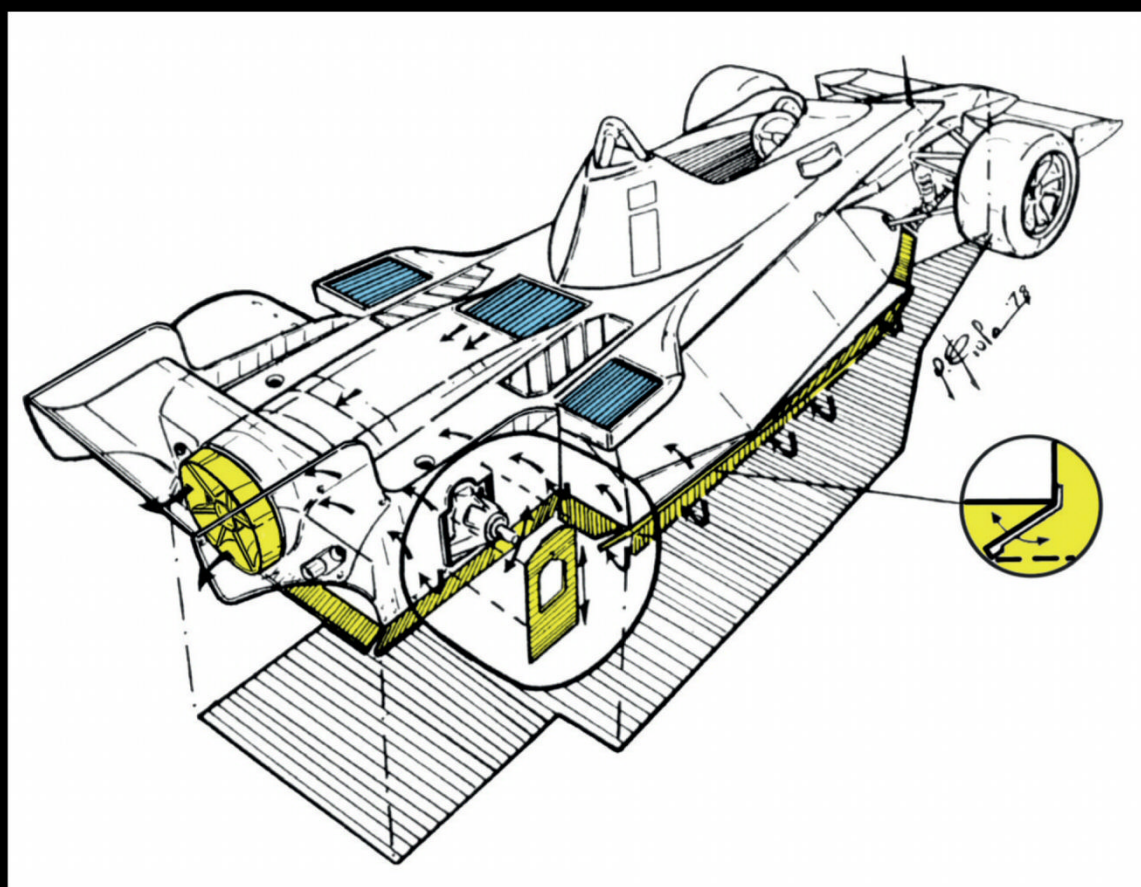
**F**ans attending the Gunnar Nilsson Memorial Trophy at the recently reopened Donington Park on 3 June 1979 might have gone home disgruntled at the complete lack of a Formula 1 race – Silverstone and Brands Hatch’s owners had lobbied the FIA to nix it – but in future years they would come to cherish having witnessed two historic final outings.

In the five-lap time-trial event which replaced the planned Race Of Champions-style non-championship F1 thrash, James Hunt essayed his final competitive laps in an F1 car (he announced his retirement four days later) while British F3 champion and F1 rookie Nelson Piquet intrigued the crowd with a car making only its second ever appearance in front of a paying audience, and its last for the better part of three decades: the Brabham BT46B, better known as the ‘Fan Car’.

Hampered by unfamiliarity with Brabham’s superseded Alfa Romeo flat-12 engine, Piquet was also rolling on higher-profile 1979-spec rear tyres which impaired the effectiveness of the car’s signature feature. Neither was he *au fait* with the counter-intuitive driving style it required: more revs equalled more grip. Piquet’s best time of 63.61s put him fourth, behind the 61.37s clocked a few minutes later by future world champion Alan Jones in a Williams FW07. It was an underwhelming coda to the radical Brabham’s short but meteoric competition history.

The genesis of the BT46B underlines a fundamental truism of motor racing: for all that the competitors publicly advocate a level playing field, in private all but the most naïve are

**“IF THEY COULD PROVE THE FAN’S “PRIMARY PURPOSE” WAS COOLING, IT HAD A COMPELLING ARGUMENT FOR LEGALITY”**



digging relentlessly to uncover an ‘unfair advantage’. By the late 1970s the Ford Cosworth V8 engine’s ubiquity was driving the better-resourced competitors to look for an edge elsewhere via advances in chassis, tyre and aerodynamic technology. When Lotus unlocked the advantages of ‘ground effect’ aero, rivals had to copy it or find alternative innovations.

Brabham and its chief engineer Gordon Murray occupied the latter camp, having partnered with Alfa Romeo from 1976 as a means of getting an edge on a field largely populated by Cossie V8s. Alfa’s flat-12 had more grunt than the DFV but this was offset by its greater weight, higher cooling demands and slightly patchier reliability, along with the company’s slightly chaotic nature – or, as Murray put it, “delightfully unstructured way of working”. Durability improved over the course of Brabham’s first two seasons with Alfa but, as the BT46 took shape on Murray’s drawing board in the winter of 1977, Brabham’s last victory (Carlos Reutemann in a Cosworth-powered BT44 in ’75) was a receding memory. Team owner Bernie Ecclestone was growing impatient.

Murray’s first blue-sky notion with the BT46 was to cool the car an entirely different way, via surface-mounted heat exchangers. This enabled him to pare back the chassis to the minimalist trapezoidal shape he had achieved on the BT42 and BT44. In practice, though, the heat exchangers offered insufficient cooling and distorted the chassis through cycles of expansion and contraction as their temperatures fluctuated.

One individual who could divine the lack of cooling by eye as he studied images of the cars during testing was David Cox, a consultant engineer with a passion for motor racing and an eclectic CV which included a stint in the aerospace industry. Cox contacted Brabham to suggest there was a problem and this led to a consultancy arrangement which would have significant influence on the B-spec BT46.

Murray was already in the process of junking the surface cooling in favour of conventional radiators, which had to be mounted at the front owing to lack of space elsewhere. It was an imperfect arrangement, but the car was



competitively quick in the hands of Lauda and John Watson – competitive, that is, with everyone bar Lotus.

While working for other teams, a number of the engineers at Lotus had tried without great success to influence the speed of the airflow around and under the car to create negative pressure and, through that, downforce and extra grip. It was while windtunnel-testing the Lotus 78, in which inverted side-mounted wings were packaged within bodywork along with the radiators, that Lotus's Peter Wright had the eureka moment... when the model began to sag. Sealing the underfloor, preventing air from being sucked in from the sides, was the key to activating the concept's potential.

Flaws in the early design – the aerodynamic centre of pressure was too far forward, creating understeer which required an oversized rear wing for balance – meant the 78 didn't quite fulfil its potential during its maiden season in 1977 and rivals were slow on the uptake. Lotus improved the concept for the following year's 79, including sliding rubber skirts rather than brushes, and a chassis optimised for more airflow through the sidepods (at some cost to rigidity). Others now had to react or be left behind but, at Brabham, Murray had a problem he shared with Ferrari: a flat-12 engine layout which ruled out a direct copy of Lotus, because the cylinder heads would impede air flow through the sidepods.

Unlike many other senior engineers up and down the grid, Murray understood what Lotus was doing – he simply couldn't clone the idea because it was fundamentally incompatible with the BT46 chassis design and engine format.

BRABHAM BT46B

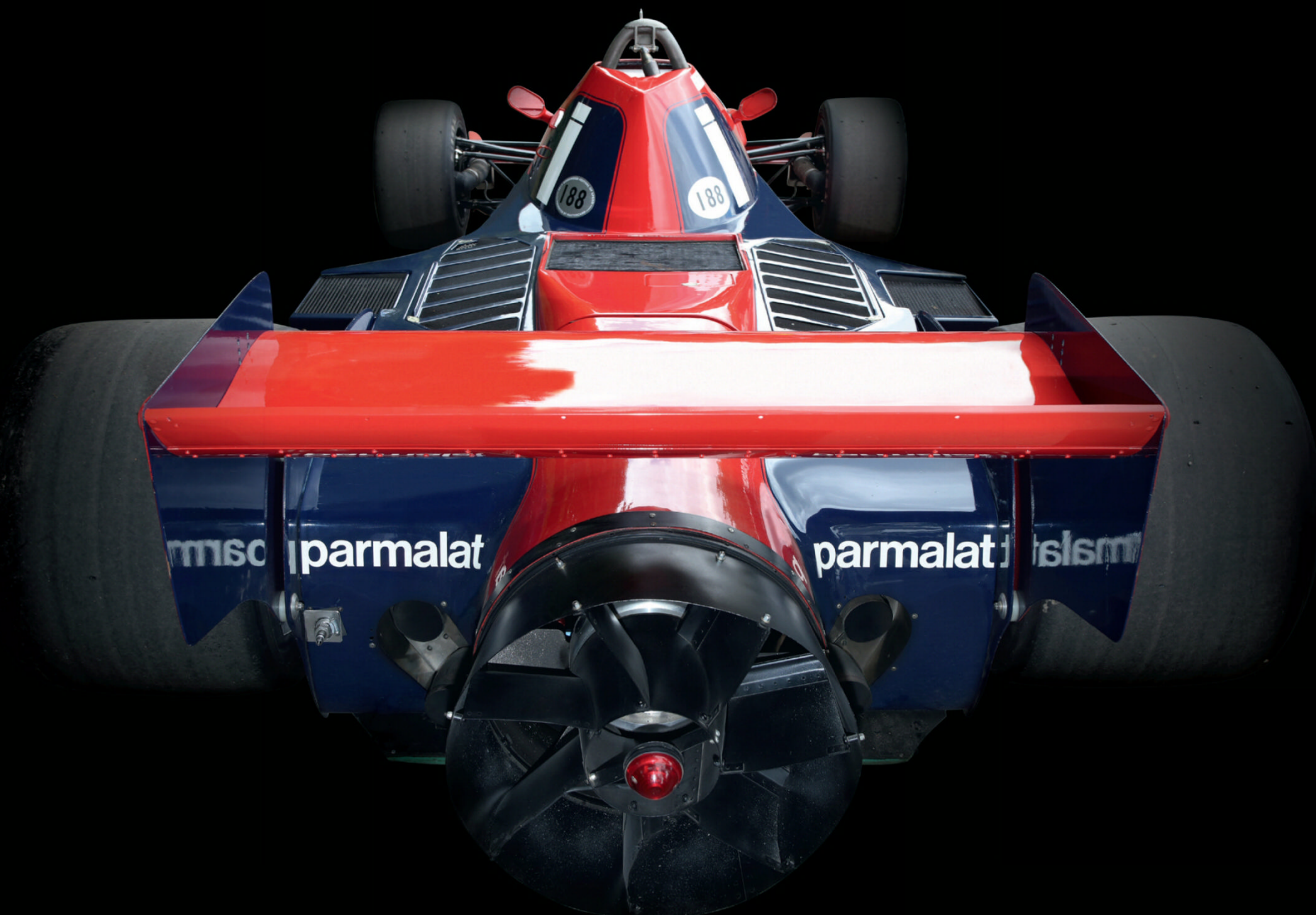
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No.97

Thus, the idea of adding downforce while solving the cooling issues with the same device was born. In 1970 Jackie Stewart had raced a Chaparral sportscar in Can-Am which used a separate two-stroke motor to drive a pair of rear mounted fans which sucked air from under the car. Murray and Cox collaborated on a similar arrangement, albeit one which would be powered by the main engine – and cleverly arranged in order to circumvent rules banning moveable aerodynamic devices. If they could prove the fan's "primary purpose" was cooling, it had a compelling argument for legality by the letter of the law, if not its spirit.

The origins of the idea are somewhat opaque. Cox is known to have seen the design for a fan concept on Maurice Phillippe's drawing board late in 1977 when he went for a job at Tyrrell. He described the encounter in a subsequent interview with *GP Racing's* sister title *Autosport*; having agreed to keep the concept confidential he discussed it with Phillippe in detail and opined that it wouldn't work as sketched, providing insufficient cooling. The concept centred around radically downsizing the car's radiators and having a crank-mounted fan pulling air from under the car via horizontal radiators mounted at floor level, thus serving a dual purpose while remaining virtually unseen.

In practice Tyrrell's system didn't work – the sides weren't sealed and the engine overheated, so it failed on both counts – and was abandoned at the testing stage. For his part, Cox told *Autosport* that in his conversations with Murray he merely prompted his new associate to come up with the fan idea ►







independently, thereby enabling Cox to keep his promise to Phillippe. Historically, Murray has taken the credit, though in later years Gary Anderson – then a Brabham mechanic, later a designer in his own right – has said that he proposed a fan system similar to Tyrrell’s after the unsuccessful first test of the surface-cooled BT46. Pick a truth you like.

Cox’s and Murray’s final design involved sealing the entire engine bay using a leather bellows arrangement similar to a blacksmith’s forge, with a vertically mounted fan scavenging the air. A large radiator atop the engine provided the fundamentals for the claim this was an innovative new cooling system, though its true purpose was obvious when the car squatted as the driver blipped the throttle: the higher the revs,

the faster the fan spun, generating more suction.

As a safety precaution Cox created a cockpit-mounted suction indicator using an altimeter from a scrapped aircraft. A pitot tube on the BT46B’s nose provided external static pressure readings which the meter could compare with those in the engine bay, warning the driver to back off if the rubber seals were damaged.

So fast was the BT46B that on its maiden race outing, at Anderstorp in Sweden, Lauda and Watson were repeatedly told to slow down in practice and Ecclestone made them qualify with the fuel tanks full. Nevertheless, they lined up second and third on the grid, much to the consternation of rival teams. Colin Chapman was the most vociferous, the Lotus chief





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BRABHAM BT46B

raising a veritable posse of fellow team owners to lodge formal objections. Besides claiming the car was illegal, they protested that the fan represented a safety hazard because it would scoop up and fire debris at following cars.

“It was never throwing dust or stones,” Murray wrote in his autobiography. “It was all led by Chapman. We would have won every race and he could see his championship flying out of the window.”

Balked by Riccardo Patrese, Watson spun off in the race but Lauda picked off Mario Andretti’s Lotus to win at a canter. Representatives of the governing body then attended the Brabham workshop, tested the BT46B’s rear end with an anemometer, and certified that over 55% of the air was passing through the radiator. The car was legal – though Murray was informed the loophole would be closed come the end of the season.

So the BT46B, counter to myth, was never banned. Rather it fell victim to politics: Ecclestone’s business portfolio also included the Formula One Constructors’ Association, via which he was in effect unionising F1 and annexing the commercial rights by stealth. A long and bitter FOCA meeting the Thursday after the race signified the political temperature and, for once, Bernie elected to play the long game and yield to those allying themselves with Chapman. Ecclestone decreed the ‘Fan Car’ be withdrawn and set his eyes once more on the pot of gold on the commercial horizon.

Murray was so enraged that he ordered the third chassis being built up as a ‘Fan Car’ to be scrapped. Next time out, at Paul Ricard, Watson delivered a rather more productive riposte to Brabham’s rivals. “It gave me unlimited pleasure,” he said, “to put my car on pole position without a fan and stick it up those little shits.” 

“ECCLESTONE DECREED THE ‘FAN CAR’ BE WITHDRAWN AND SET HIS EYES ONCE MORE ON THE POT OF GOLD ON THE COMMERCIAL HORIZON”



#### RACE RECORD

**Starts** 1  
**Wins** 1  
**Poles** 0  
**Fastest laps** 1  
**Podiums** 0  
**Constructors’ championship points** 9

#### SPECIFICATION

**Chassis** Aluminium monocoque  
**Suspension** Double wishbones with inboard pullrod-actuated coil-over dampers  
**Engine** Alfa Romeo flat-12  
**Engine capacity** 2995cc  
**Power** 520bhp@12000rpm (est)  
**Gearbox** Brabham/Hewland six-speed manual  
**Tyres** Goodyear  
**Weight** 585kg  
**Notable drivers**  
Niki Lauda, John Watson, Nelson Piquet





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# THE COMEBACK TRAIL

Whether it's returning from injury or retirement, or retrieving a race from a seemingly impossible situation, everyone likes a good comeback...

▼ *Kimi Räikkönen started the 2005 Japanese GP in 17th but then produced one of the drives of his career. Here his McLaren is passing Felipe Massa for 11th, but going onto the last lap Kimi trailed leader Giancarlo Fisichella, only to slide past at Turn 1 to claim the win*







*Fernando Alonso genuinely thought he was done with F1 at the end of 2018 and went off to race sportscars, Indycars and in the Dakar Rally. But the pull of his old 'Enstone' team proved too great and he has returned with Alpine for another crack at F1*



*Spectators at the 1997 Luxembourg GP welcome back Olivier Panis. The Frenchman had missed seven races, following a high-speed accident at the Canadian GP where he broke both his legs. He managed sixth place on his return to action*



*Mike Thackwell qualified for the 1980 Canadian GP but had to hand his Tyrrell over to Jean-Pierre Jarier after a race-stopping first lap accident. Four years later Thackwell made his first official F1 start and so completed his 'comeback' at the same race*





◀ After doing 25 F1 races in bit part seasons from 1991 to 1994, Alex Zanardi went to the US and won two consecutive Champ Car titles. Williams brought him back to F1 on a three-year contract, starting in 1999, but Zanardi only lasted a single season after being overwhelmingly beaten by teammate Ralf Schumacher



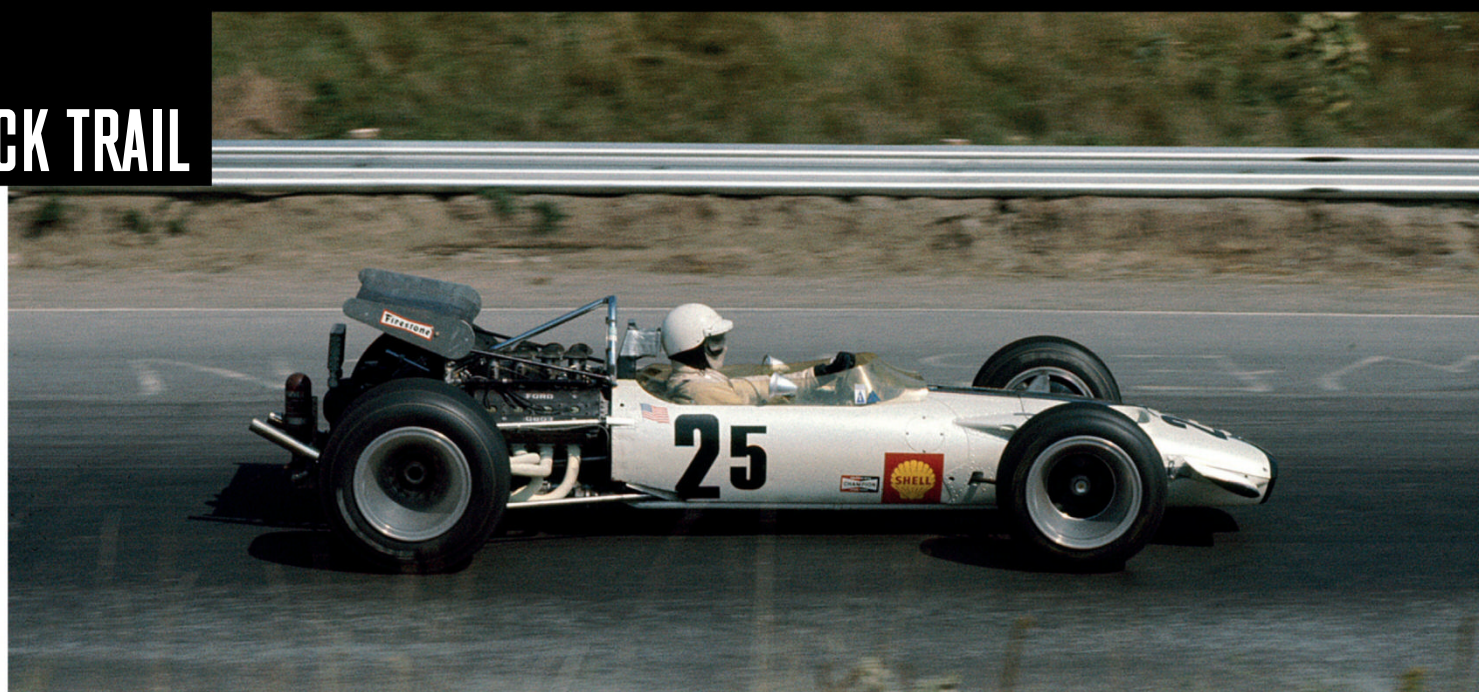
When Jenson Button called a halt to his F1 career at the end of 2016, McLaren retained him as a reserve driver for 2017. And when Fernando Alonso went to race in the Indy 500 Button was forced to stand in for Alonso at Monaco, a situation Button was contractually unable to extricate himself from







A year after Pete Lovely turned up to race for Lotus at the 1959 Monaco GP, only to find the car hadn't arrived, he made his F1 debut in a privateer Cooper. Nine years then passed before Lovely visited F1 again. In 1969, after two non-championship outings, he entered and ran a Lotus 49B in the last three races of the season



Robert Kubica was set to stay with Renault for 2011 and had already signed a contract with Ferrari for 2012 when he had his life-threatening rally accident in February 2011. After a long rehabilitation, racing in other disciplines, some testing and a season as a reserve driver in 2018, Kubica finally returned to an F1 race seat with Williams in 2019



The face of Niki Lauda at the Italian GP just six weeks after he nearly died in the 1976 German GP. Lauda's amazing return to try to claim a second world championship came up short, but he triumphed the following season. Lauda also returned to F1 in 1982, after retiring before the end of 1979, and won a third title in 1984







After a failed comeback in 1999, after two seasons away, Luca Badoer fell back on his role as Ferrari's F1 test driver. When Felipe Massa was injured at the 2009 Hungarian GP and Michael Schumacher was unable to replace him, Ferrari drafted Badoer in for the European GP, the first Italian to drive for the Scuderia in 15 years. Badoer was well off the pace and Ferrari binned him after two starts



Jan Lammers scored no points during four bit-part seasons with backmarker teams from 1979-1982. After a successful sportscar career and a season of Japanese F3000 in 1991 Lammers, aged 36, was parachuted in at March for the final two races of 1992, as a replacement for Sauber-bound Karl Wendlinger. Those 10 years and three months between starts remains an F1 record







▲ Although Ayrton Senna had qualified his McLaren on pole for the 1988 Japanese GP, after he stalled at the start the Brazilian dropped to 14th. With the world title at stake he began his fightback immediately and regained six places on lap one. Fourth by the end of lap four, Senna eventually forced his way past team-mate and title rival Alain Prost on lap 28 before pulling away for the win and the championship

▼ The 1967 Italian GP at Monza was a race of contrasts for Jim Clark. He qualified his Lotus on pole, bogged down at the start, recovered to lead by lap three, only to lose that lead and an entire lap when he pitted on lap 12 with a puncture. He rejoined 15th, spent the next 48 laps battling his way back and re-took the lead on lap 60. Then, on the final lap, a fuel feed problem cruelly robbed him of the win and dropped him to third

▼ Nigel Mansell won the 1992 world championship with Williams and promptly 'retired' from F1 after team and driver were unable to agree a new deal. He left to race in America but, following Ayrton Senna's death in 1994, Williams brought Mansell back to F1 for the French GP, and the final three races of the season. Mansell moved on to McLaren for 1995, but only drove for the team twice before he stepped away from F1 for good







► Mika Hakkinen (left) and David Coulthard lift Rubens Barrichello after the Ferrari driver made the podium for the 2000 German GP. It was Barrichello's first F1 win and it came after he had started from 18th on the grid due to an oil leak in qualifying. Barrichello had stayed out on slicks during a crucial period of the race, when most drivers switched to wet tyres...



◄ Juan Manuel Fangio began the 1957 German GP at the Nürburgring with softer tyres and the fuel tanks on his Maserati half full, to counter the strategy of the Ferraris. His planned pitstop on lap 13 was a disaster though, and he went from 30s ahead to 51s adrift of the lead duo of Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins. Nine lap records later, Fangio crossed the line 3.6s ahead of Hawthorn for his final F1 win



# ★ MAN OF ★ THE MOMENT

How Sergio Perez's career been building up to this year's Mexico City Grand Prix

MEXICO CITY

MEXICO CITY - MEXICO

**Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez**

29<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2021

A product of the Ferrari Driver Academy, Perez grew from his image as the 'Mexican Wunderkind' to a safe pair of hands, and the poster boy for motorsport in Mexico. Podiums in Malaysia, Canada and Italy in his second season with Sauber showcased his potential, and he would appear on the third step at a smattering of races across his tenure.

Given his record, the very fact he could be ousted was shocking. In 191 race starts, Perez has scored points in 116 races, which is a mega record for a driver who spent his career with the evolving Racing Point/Force India, a declining McLaren, and an underperforming Sauber.

But despite growing to become one of the grid's most experienced drivers, 2020 posed challenges he'd never imagined. Ousted from his seat, the first driver to miss races due to COVID, and racing with an uncertain future ahead of him. But that didn't phase him in the slightest.

He scored points in every race of 2020 bar four: the two British races he missed with COVID, and engine blowouts in Bahrain and Abu Dhabi. As the year went on, he went from strength to strength, with a podium in Turkey, a 3rd place cruelly denied by engine failure, and his famous win in Sakhir. He'd proved his worth, and the paddock was listening.

Those performances left Red Bull Racing with no choice but to fit him into their plans. And so, within months, Sergio Perez's world has turned upside down. He won't be watching this season from the sofa, but from the cockpit of one of the grid's most competitive cars, where podiums and wins will be on the cards, if not expected.

That will have been news that rocked Mexico. Since the return of race in Mexico City in 2015, Checo's name has reverberated around the famous Foro Sol baseball stadium. When he returns in November, he will be hoping to repay their dedication with a win, and something to really celebrate.

## LAST 5 YEARS

**2015:** The first race at Autódromo Hermanos Rodríguez in 23 years was won by polesitter Nico Rosberg, who experienced celebrations before the giant crowd.

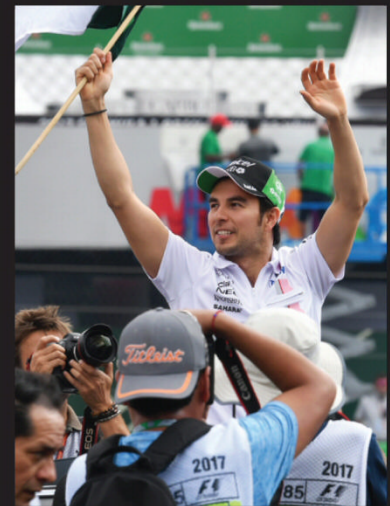
**Perez result - 8th**

**2016:** Lewis Hamilton kept the title race alive in a dramatic race that saw both Verstappen and Vettel stripped of podiums post-race.

**Perez result - 10th**

**2017:** Lewis Hamilton closed the door on Sebastian Vettel to secure his 4th World Championship in style.

**Perez result - 7th**



**2018:** Verstappen took his second Mexican victory in a row, and celebrated yet another World Championship in Mexico City.

**Perez result - DNF**

**2019:** Hamilton was on top as Bottas fell behind in the title race, as Perez gave the home crowd something to cheer about after qualifying in 11th.

**Perez result - 7th**





# GRANDSTAND GUIDE:

## WHERE TO WATCH THE MEXICAN GRAND PRIX



### MAIN GRANDSTANDS 1 & 2 RRP £1,110

Soak up the atmosphere as the teams prepare on the grid and witness the all-important chequered flag moment.



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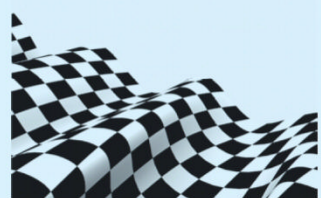


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FINISHING STRAIGHT

# RACE DEBRIEF

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 1

## THE BAHRAIN GP IN 3 KEY MOMENTS



### 1 Verstappen's costly triple threat

**Max Verstappen** drove the fastest car, topped every practice session and qualified on pole position, but ultimately three key factors denied him the victory his pace merited.

First, a differential problem on Verstappen's RB16B, which caused wheelspin at low speed and hurt him particularly on the run out of the Turn 1/2/3 complex. Despite efforts to fix this, it cost Max 0.3s per lap early in the race.

Then there was the fact Mercedes was one of only two teams (the other being Red Bull's sister squad AlphaTauri) to start this race with an extra set of hard-compound tyres available. This turned out to be the best race tyre. An extra set would have allowed Red Bull to mirror reigning champion Lewis Hamilton's strategy (medium/hard/hard) and extend Verstappen's second stint, giving him better

tyre life with which to attack Hamilton at the end.

Verstappen still ultimately had enough in hand to threaten but having closed in relentlessly during the final stint then picked up DRS with five laps to go, Verstappen made a crucial mistake, running all four wheels off the circuit at Turn 4 after a slingshot move around Hamilton's outside. Red Bull consulted race control, which said the pass was illegal so Verstappen should concede the lead, which he did after reaching the back straight.

Christian Horner and Toto Wolff both questioned the consistency of the stewards' approach to track limits here, given they were enforced through practice and qualifying yet both Mercedes regularly ran wide at Turn 4 in the race (gaining 0.2s a time said Horner) without sanction. Verstappen infamously lost a podium finish at the 2017 US GP

by going off track to pass Kimi Räikkönen's Ferrari, so ultimately his race-winning move in Bahrain was never likely to stand.

Over team radio, Max angrily suggested Red Bull should have ignored the call: "Why didn't you let me go? I could have easily got the five seconds. I prefer to lose like that than to be second like this". But this desired outcome seemed doubtful. Waiting another lap to attack at Turn 1 instead might have been wiser...

In any case, after conceding track position, Verstappen lost rhythm and couldn't get close enough to attack again.

"I got into Turn 13 and had a big oversteer and from there onwards I just didn't have the tyres anymore to attack," Max explained. "My tyres were, I think, 10 or 11 laps younger [than Hamilton's],



Apart from that Turn 4 pass, Max got close to Lewis but was unable make a legitimate overtake



but with these cars that advantage goes away very quickly once you get within 1.5s.

"It's of course a shame, but you also have to see the positive – we're really putting the fight on to them and I think that's great to start the year like that."

## 2 Mercedes has 'no strengths' compared to Red Bull

**Hamilton admitted** Mercedes expected to be "six to eight tenths" behind after pre-season testing, so was delighted to qualify within four tenths of Verstappen's Red Bull, which carried 0.1s worth of damage after striking a kerb in Q1.

Wolff conceded Mercedes was losing time to Red Bull at high speed, while also suffering power unit "derates" – a shortage of recovered energy – on the straights. Otmar Szafnauer, team boss of Mercedes customer squad Aston Martin, complained the new 'skinny floor' rules also disproportionately affected the two teams running 'low rake' (low rear ride height) cars, namely Mercedes and Aston.

"If you compare qualifying between the races here in Bahrain, now and four months ago, it looks like the high-rake cars have gained a second per lap compared to the low-rake cars," Szafnauer said. "Mercedes and ourselves are the worst affected."

Mercedes' trackside engineering director, Andrew Shovlin, admitted Mercedes now "don't really have any strengths" compared to the Red Bull, in which Honda's engine now sits lower and with a lower crankshaft position for aerodynamic benefit.

"We've had a lot of years where we've been able to rely on straight-line speed, or high-speed cornering or interconnecting corners," Shovlin explained. "But here we weren't taking any time out of them anywhere. There were a couple of corners where they took chunks out of us in qualifying: the high-speed and Turn 9/10. And that's the main thing – in qualifying we're just bang on their pace in our best corners and they're quicker in the others, so we need a faster car, as simple as that."



Hamilton and Mercedes were made to work very hard by Red Bull for Lewis's 96th victory

All of which made Hamilton's opportunistic victory, utilising aggressive strategy and expert tyre management allied to a slice of good fortune, a real steal for Mercedes.

## 3 Norris wins battle of the midfield maestros

**Valtteri Bottas comfortably** finished third, despite a poor opening stint, a slow pitstop and stopping again to bag the fastest lap bonus point, so it's clear Red Bull and Mercedes are miles ahead.

But behind them we have the makings of a fascinating battle. Charles Leclerc qualified the much-improved Ferrari – greater rear-end stability and more power – fourth, but he ultimately lost out to McLaren's Lando Norris, who raced superbly in the early laps and remained beyond the grasp of Sergio Pérez, recovering from a pitlane start after his Red Bull shut down on the formation lap.

There were also encouraging signs for AlphaTauri and Alfa Romeo. Pierre Gasly qualified fifth and would have been favourite to finish fourth had he not lost his front wing dicing with the McLarens of Norris and Daniel Ricciardo early on.

George Russell said Alfa Romeo was the biggest surprise of testing and, after Antonio Giovinazzi came within a tenth of making Q3, Kimi Räikkönen fought strongly for the lower points, only narrowly losing out to Yuki Tsunoda and Lance Stroll.

# RESULTS ROUND 1

SAKHIR / 28.3.21 / 56 LAPS



1st	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	1h32m03.897s
2nd	Max Verstappen	Red Bull	+0.745s
3rd	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes	+37.383s
4th	Lando Norris	McLaren	+46.466s
5th	Sergio Pérez	Red Bull	+52.047s
6th	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	+59.090s
7th	Daniel Ricciardo	McLaren	+66.004s
8th	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	+67.100s
9th	Yuki Tsunoda	AlphaTauri	+85.692s
10th	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin	+86.713s
11th	Kimi Räikkönen	Alfa Romeo	+88.864s
12th	Antonio Giovinazzi	Alfa Romeo	+1 lap
13th	Esteban Ocon	Alpine	+1 lap
14th	George Russell	Williams	+1 lap
15th	Sebastian Vettel	Aston Martin	+1 lap*
16th	Mick Schumacher	Haas	+1 lap
17th	Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri	+4 laps/gearbox
18th	Nicholas Latifi	Williams	+5 laps/boost leak

\*includes 10s penalty for causing a collision

<b>Retirements</b>		
Fernando Alonso	Alpine	32 laps - brakes
Nikita Mazepin	Haas	0 laps - accident

<b>Fastest lap</b>	
Valtteri Bottas:	1m32.090s on lap 56

<b>TYRE COMPOUNDS USED</b>				
Hard (C2)	Medium (C3)	Soft (C4)	Inter	Wet

<b>CLIMATE</b>	<b>AIR TEMP</b>	<b>TRACK TEMP</b>
Dry into night	21°C	25°C

# DRIVERS' STANDINGS

1	Hamilton	25pts	11	Räikkönen	0pts
2	Verstappen	18pts	12	Giovinazzi	0pts
3	Bottas	16pts	13	Ocon	0pts
4	Norris	12pts	14	Russell	0pts
5	Pérez	10pts	15	Vettel	0pts
6	Leclerc	8pts	16	Schumacher	0pts
7	Ricciardo	6pts	17	Gasly	0pts
8	Sainz	4pts	18	Latifi	0pts
9	Tsunoda	2pts	19	Alonso	0pts
10	Stroll	1pts	20	Mazepin	0pts







FINISHING STRAIGHT

## RACE PREVIEW

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 2

## EMILIA ROMAGNA GP

16-18 April 2021  
Autodromo Enzo e Dino Ferrari

PICTURES: CHARLES COATES; MARK SUTTON; STEVE ETHERINGTON. ILLUSTRATIONS: ALAN ELDRIDGE



## THE MAIN EVENT

**Making an unexpected** second return to the F1 calendar thanks to COVID-19 and the postponement of the Chinese GP, the Autodromo Enzo e Dino Ferrari is loved more for its ambience than the racing it facilitates. A narrow track and sinuous layout makes for relatively few overtaking opportunities and therefore frustration for the drivers – who, otherwise, rather enjoy the challenge it presents.

Springtime in the backbone of Italy can mean unpredictable weather – a pre-race downpour caused Alain Prost to spin off on the warm-up lap in 1991. The presence of Ferrari's faithful tifosi usually warms the soul but, as this edition of *GP Racing* closed for press, all the signs were pointing to this event having to be run behind closed doors again. Still, the denizens of the houses overlooking Rivazza will no doubt be on their roofs with the Ferrari flags again...

## 2020 RACE RECAP

Valtteri Bottas led from pole for Mercedes as Red Bull's Max Verstappen passed Bottas's team-mate Lewis Hamilton for second to take up the chase. On the second time around Bottas hit some debris which lodged in one of his bargeboards, hampering his car's aerodynamics.

A Virtual Safety Car period around the first pitstops enabled Hamilton to claim the lead and then Verstappen passed Bottas, only to spin off when a tyre failed. The ensuing full Safety Car period bunched the field, which then led to a helter-skelter final few laps behind the two leading Mercedes.

**KEY CORNER: TURN 2** Tamburello's conversion from flat-out kink into a left-right-left complex has made it an overtaking opportunity, particularly after the more recent deletion of the chicane before the start-finish straight.



## RACE DATA

**Venue** Autodromo

Enzo e Dino Ferrari

**First GP** 1980**Number of laps** 63**Circuit length** 3.050 miles**Longest straight** 0.223 miles**Elevation change** 121 feet**Race distance** 192.03 miles**Lap record** 1m15.484s

Lewis Hamilton (2020)

**F1 races held** 28**Winners from pole** 9**Pirelli compounds** C2, C3, C4

## CAR PERFORMANCE

**Downforce level** Medium**Cooling requirement** Medium**Full throttle** 70%**Top speed** 207mph**Average speed** 129mph

## TIMETABLE (UK TIME)

**Friday** 16 April**Practice 1** 10:30-11:30**Practice 2** 14:00-15:00**Saturday** 17 April**Practice 3** 11:00-12:00**Qualifying** 14:00-15:00**Sunday** 18 April**Race** 14:00**Live coverage** Sky Sports F1**Highlights** Channel 4

## THE WINNERS HERE...



2020

Lewis  
Hamilton  
Mercedes

2006

Michael  
Schumacher  
Ferrari

2005

Fernando  
Alonso  
Renault

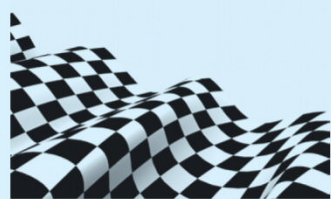
2004

Michael  
Schumacher  
Ferrari

2003

Michael  
Schumacher  
Ferrari





FINISHING STRAIGHT

# RACE PREVIEW

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 3

# PORTUGUESE GP

30 April-2 May 2021  
Autódromo Internacional do Algarve



## THE MAIN EVENT

**The twisty, undulating** track near Portimao on the Atlantic coast has ridden to the rescue again, filling the gap in the calendar left by the postponed Vietnamese Grand Prix. A popular venue for many disciplines of racing, it proved unexpectedly challenging for the Formula 1 teams last year when the circuit owners decided to resurface the track a few weeks before the grand prix. The result was a slippery surface which yielded far less grip than expected, even in the balmy weather conditions which prevailed at the time.

Offset strategies made for a most entertaining race in 2020 even though the driver who started on pole eventually won. Now that the surface has matured a bit and the teams and the tyre supplier have more data at their disposal, we may not see a repeat of such drama, but it's a delightful and challenging circuit nonetheless.

## 2020 RACE RECAP

Lewis Hamilton broke Michael Schumacher's record of 91 GP victories by winning from pole, but it was McLaren's Carlos Sainz who starred in the early laps as he and a clutch of other drivers starting on Pirelli's soft tyres set the pace. Sainz's lead lasted until lap six before the medium rubber switched on and more regular service was resumed.

Hamilton looked to be struggling early on, particularly on the opening lap, and Bottas opened up a lead of three seconds after they passed the McLaren. But once Hamilton got his tyres up to temperature he found more pace and surged by his team-mate to win by a crushing 25 seconds.

**KEY CORNER: TURN 10-11** A blind-entry double-apex right-hander, this is undoubtedly the most challenging section on the circuit. This is the kind of corner even the best drivers feel they haven't quite nailed.



## RACE DATA

**Circuit** Autódromo Internacional do Algarve  
**First GP** 2020  
**Number of laps** 66  
**Circuit length** 2.891 miles  
**Longest straight** 0.602 miles  
**Race distance** 190.65 miles  
**Lap record** 1m18.750s, Lewis Hamilton (2020)  
**F1 races held** 1  
**Winners from pole** 1  
**Pirelli compounds** C1, C2, C3

## CAR PERFORMANCE

**Downforce level** High  
**Cooling requirement** Medium  
**Full throttle** 70%  
**Top speed** 201mph  
**Average speed** 126mph

## TIMETABLE

**Friday** 30 April  
**Practice 1** 11.30-12.30  
**Practice 2** 15:00-16:00  
**Saturday** 1 May  
**Practice 3** 12:00-13:00  
**Qualifying** 15:00-16:00  
**Sunday** 2 May  
**Race** 15:00  
**Live coverage** Sky Sports F1  
**Highlights** Channel 4

## THE WINNER HERE...



2020

Lewis  
Hamilton  
Mercedes





FINISHING STRAIGHT

## RACE PREVIEW

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 4

## SPANISH GP

7-9 May 2021  
Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya

PICTURE: ANDY HONE. ILLUSTRATION: ALAN ELDREDGE



## RACE DATA

**Circuit name** Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya  
**First grand prix** 1991  
**Number of laps** 66  
**Circuit length** 2.904 miles  
**Race distance** 191.646 miles  
**Longest straight** 0.81 miles  
**Elevation change** 87.9 feet  
**Lap record** 1m18.183s, Valtteri Bottas (before T10 changes)  
**F1 races held** 30  
**Winners from pole** 22  
**Pirelli compounds** C1, C2, C3

## CAR PERFORMANCE

**Downforce level** High  
**Cooling requirement** Medium  
**Full throttle** 64.4%  
**Top speed** 200mph  
**Average speed** 119mph

TIMETABLE  
(UK TIME)

**Friday** 7 May  
**Practice 1** 10:30-11:30  
**Practice 2** 14:00-15:00  
**Saturday** 8 May  
**Practice 3** 11:00-12:00  
**Qualifying** 14:00-15:00  
**Sunday** 9 May  
**Race** 14:00  
**Live coverage** Sky Sports F1  
**Highlights** Channel 4

## THE MAIN EVENT

**Few things in** Formula 1 say "business as usual" quite as much as Barcelona in early May. The return of the Spanish Grand Prix to its usual slot feels like another small step in the general direction of normality – although this year, of course, F1's teams will assemble here without the benefit of six days of pre-season testing at the same venue.

The Spanish GP traditionally kicks off the first European leg of the season and is the race at which the majority of teams deploy their first major upgrade packages. This year is slightly different in that F1 has shifted back to Europe early, with rounds in Italy and Portugal, so a handful of teams may already have brought car updates. In fact, since the most competitive outfits are looking to taper early in favour of development for 2022, this may be one of the last grands prix to feature new components...

## 2020 RACE RECAP

Only three drivers finished on the lead lap as Lewis Hamilton won from pole by a crushing 24-second margin. His Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas had lined up second on the grid but made a poor start which dropped him to fourth.

Bottas found himself stuck behind the Mercedes-clone Racing Point of Lance Stroll and it took until lap five for him to get by using DRS, by which time Hamilton and Red Bull's Max Verstappen were too far up the road. Verstappen, for his part, was only clinging on, lacking the pace to challenge the dominant Mercedes.

**KEY CORNER: TURN 10** Modified in 2004 to reduce speeds because of limited run-off, this sharp left-hander has been rounded off. Shifting the emphasis from braking towards conservation of momentum may affect laptime.



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2017  
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Hamilton  
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2016  
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Verstappen  
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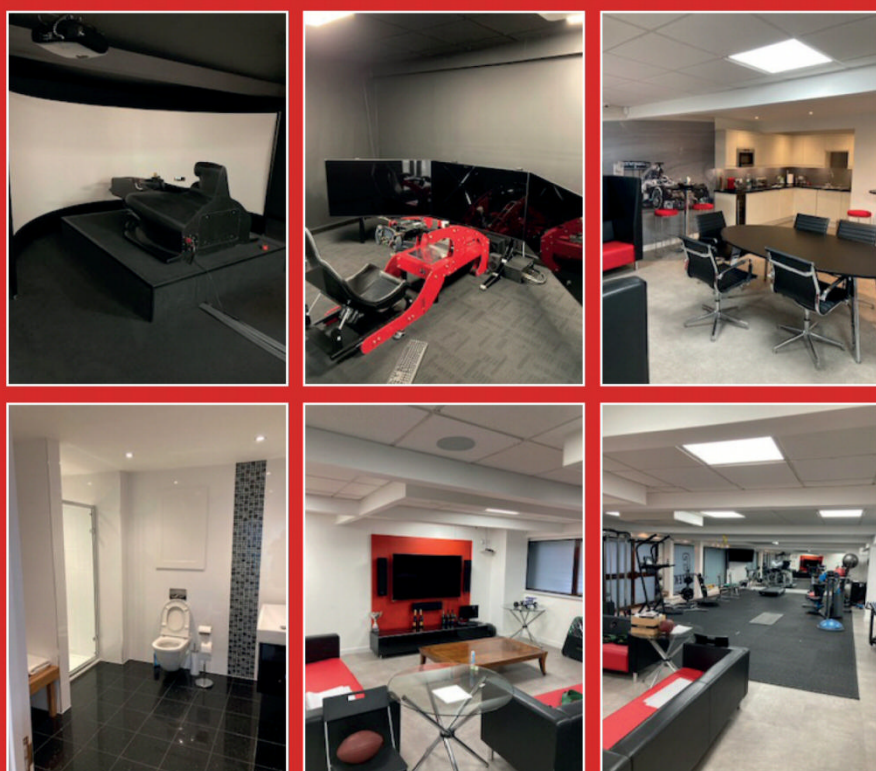
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# F1 UPGRADES

Enhance the F1 experience with the latest must-have products

## FORMULA 1 CAR BY CAR 1990-99

**Author** Peter Higham

**Price** £50

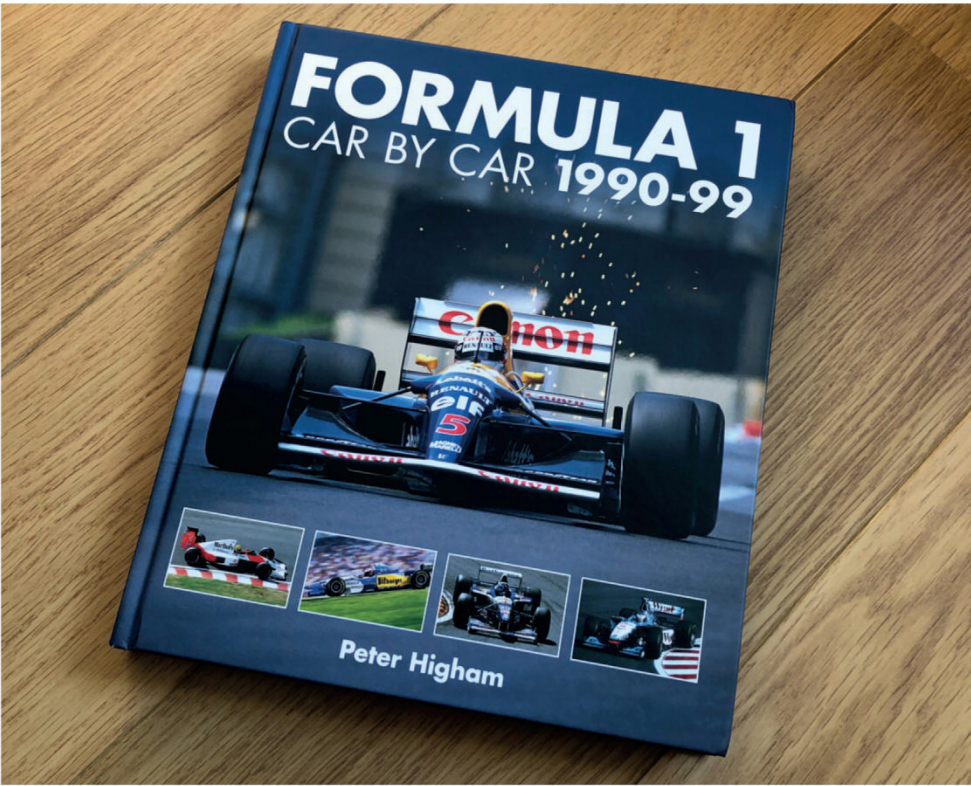
[evropublishing.com](http://evropublishing.com)

Formerly **GP Racing's** publisher and MD of LAT Images, now a full-time writer and archive scouter, Peter Higham is back with the latest in his series of beautifully detailed summaries of a decade in Formula 1.

The 1990s brought consolidation to the F1 grid as the minnows were allowed to fade into the ether, and the governing body fought an ongoing

battle to control ever-increasing car performance. There was tragedy, too, in 1994 when Roland Ratzenberger and Ayrton Senna lost their lives during the San Marino GP weekend.

As with the other books in this series, the story of each season unfolds through a detailed description of each team's entry each year. And although the grid becomes more



homogenous towards the end of the decade, there's still much of interest to pick out among the obscurata at the back of the grid early on, including Footwork and its boat-anchor of a Porsche V12, along with the Life and its unwieldy W12. The photographers responsible for capturing images of some of these cars have surely earned their coin, given how few of them made it through prequalifying...

## PODIUM STEERING WHEEL BMW M4 GT3

**Price** £tbc

[bmw.fanatec.com](http://bmw.fanatec.com)



**Due to be released shortly**, the Podium Steering Wheel BMW M4 GT3 is aimed at the sim racer who thought they had everything. A collaboration between sim gear manufacturer Fanatec and BMW, this steering wheel blurs the line between virtual and real racing – because it's designed to be interchangeable. BMW factory driver Philipp Eng demonstrated that at the product's virtual launch by rolling on to the stage in the new BMW M4 GT3 race car, then removing the steering wheel and transferring it to

a simulator rig where he completed several laps. The wheel is homologated for GT3 racing and built from carbonfibre, with backlit buttons and rotary switches, an OLED display, custom thumb encoders, dual-action magnetic gear shifters and dual-Hall sensor clutch paddles. There's a USB-C port for firmware upgrades, and the wheel is programmable in both the real car and via FanaLab on the PC. It's also compatible with PS4 and PS5 when connected via a licensed wheel base.



## TAG HEUER FORMULA 1 WATCHES

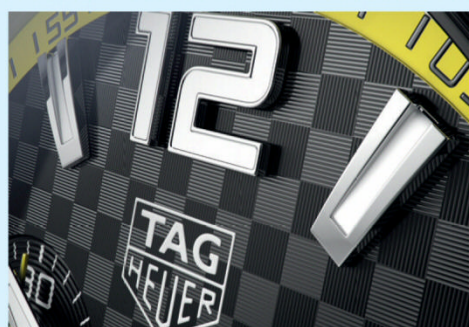
**Price** £1,200-£1,700

[tagheuer.com](http://tagheuer.com)

**Longtime Formula 1** sponsor TAG Heuer, currently supporting Red Bull, has launched four new versions of its F1 timepiece to mark the start of the new season. Orange is the dominant colour of the vibrant three-hand model which comes with a nylon strap styled after an F1 safety harness. On the steel-strap chronographs the colour scheme is more subtle, featuring grey textured dials with accents in either orange or lime green. All models are built around a quartz movement and a 43mm bezel, encased in steel.

An additional limited-edition model featuring a carbonfibre-effect dial, red and yellow hands on the second/

minute scales, a black ceramic bezel and a three-row strap in brushed steel and ceramic, is available as an online exclusive for £1,900.



## RETROCLASSIC TEES

**Price** from £24

[retroclassicclothing.com](http://retroclassicclothing.com)

**A family owned**, Wiltshire-based business founded in 2012, RetroClassic Clothing caters for the tastes of those with a preference for vintage and classic automotive and motorsport machinery.

The latest t-shirt range includes an eclectic mix of road-going machinery from Routemaster buses to the Bugatti Type 57, while the offering of race cars extends from mainstream classics such as the Porsche 917,

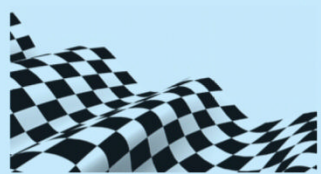
Maserati 250F and Lotus 49 to more rarefied examples such as 'Queen of Brooklands' Kay Petre's Austin 7. There are also entries from the aviation and motorcycling genre.

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ethically sourced 100% cotton, and are available in sizes starting at XS and going up to 3XL. They are designed around a slim fit, so when ordering it may be advisable to choose the next size up.







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## 'THE WAY IT'S ALWAYS BEEN' IS NO LONGER AN OPTION

**Many years ago – 2007** in fact – I was sent to grill the team principal of one of the big-name manufacturer outfits for an entry in *GP Racing's* Long Interview series. The conversation came round to budget caps which were, as now, among the issues being hotly debated within the lofty inner circle of Formula 1's powermongers.

"It will never happen," he said dismissively, waving the question away as if he were enjoying a coffee outside a Parisian bistro and I were a street urchin attempting to sell him clothes pegs or somesuch. "Too difficult to police, I think."

During the course of whittling the transcript down to fill the allocated space I kicked this section into touch, thinking that *GP Racing* readers would rightly find the subject dull. Shame, as it turned out, for we could have hoist him by his own petard: not a month later

this same individual was quoted in another organ, lavishing such praise upon the notion of budget capping that you might imagine it to be humankind's most towering achievement since the discovery of fire.

Spurious cant attends this subject like a Greek chorus – and here we are again as, scant months after grudgingly acceding to a budget cap while simultaneously crowing about how generous and far-sighted they have been in permitting it to happen, F1's most profligate teams are now lobbying to be made an exception.

**The financial clout of Mercedes and Red Bull has, in the past, enabled them to attract the best engineers**



As talks progress on the putative Saturday sprint-race format being evaluated this year, some teams have flagged up the potential extra costs arising from them. Those who have had to downsize in terms of headcount to meet the cap are now saying a few nerfed front wings in these sprint races might require them to shed still more staff.

This is an emotive argument, but one which loses impetus when viewed objectively through the prism of a world in which the majority of the population has had to make sacrifices to get by, and businesses have faced tough decisions in order to survive and thrive. *GP Racing*, for instance, operates on a quarter of the full-time staff it had in 2007.

It's one of the paradoxes of F1 that a category defined by technical innovation is co-steered by bodies who are fundamentally averse to change. F1's political history is amply garlanded with examples

of *argumentum ad antiquitatem*, the appeal to tradition, a classic logical fallacy: "That's the way we've always done it, so it must be right."

In Max Mosley's autobiography he recalls the pushback against his initiative to force manufacturers to build engines which could last for a full race weekend or more. "But we've always changed engines on a Saturday night," spluttered one enraged grandee team principal.

In recent years the likes of Mercedes and Red Bull have in effect monopolised engineering talent by outspending their rivals, pouring almost unlimited resources into R&D and recruiting the finest engineers. The result has been an often stultifying state of competitive affairs on track, while smaller teams struggle both to get by and to hold on to their best staff. F1's major barometers of health – income and viewer engagement among them – have suffered as a result.

Painful as the process may be, these outfits must un-learn the spending habits of a lifetime. Things aren't what they were, they're what they are. Money-no-object F1 is reaching the end of the road.

Hopefully some of the naked hypocrisy will evaporate too.

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